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THE

HISTORY

OF

AMERICA.

VOL. II.

THE HISTORY OF AMERICA.

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THE

HISTORY

OF

AMERICA.

By WILLIAM ROBERTSON, D.D.

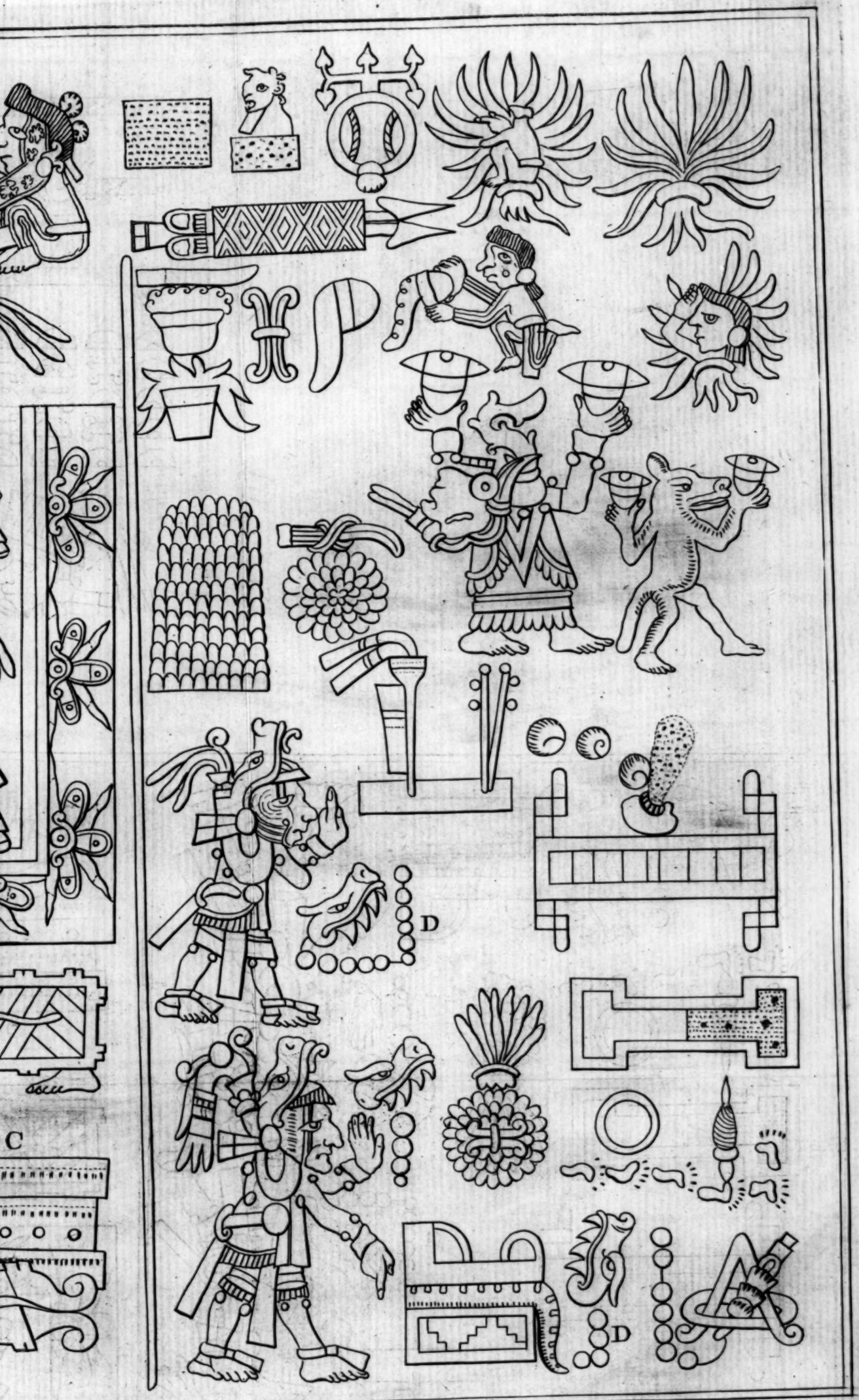
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THE

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AMERICA.

BOOK IV.

TWENTY-SIX years had now elapſed ſince Columbus conducted the people of Europe to the New World. During that period the Spaniards had made great progreſs in exploring its various regions. They had viſited all the iſlands ſcattered in different cluſters through that part of the ocean which flows in between North and South America. They had ſailed along the eaſtern coaſt of the continent from the river de la Plata to the bottom of the Mexican gulf, and had found that it ſtretched without interruption through this vaſt portion of the globe. They had diſcovered the great Southern Ocean, which opened new proſpects in that quarter. They had acquired ſome knowledge of the coaſt of Florida, which led them to obſerve the continent as it extended in an oppoſite direction; and though they puſhed their diſcoveries no farther towards the north, other nations had viſited thoſe parts which they

BOOK IV.

What parts of America were then known.

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they neglected. The Engliſh, in a voyage, the motives and ſucceſs of which ſhall be related in another part of this Hiſtory, had ſailed along the coaſt of America from Labrador to the confines of Florida; and the Portugueſe, in queſt of a ſhorter paſſage to the Eaſt Indies, had ventured into the northern ſeas, and viewed the ſame regions [a]. Thus, at the period where I have choſen to take a view of the ſtate of the New World, its extent was known almoſt from its northern extremity to thirty-five degrees ſouth of the equator. The countries which ſtretch from thence to the ſouthern boundary of America, the great empire of Peru, and the extenſive dominions ſubject to the ſovereigns of Mexico, were ſtill undiſcovered.

The vaſt extent of the New World.

When we contemplate the New World, the firſt circumſtance that ſtrikes us is its immenſe extent. It was not a ſmall portion of the earth, ſo inconſiderable that it might have eſcaped the obſervation or reſearch of former ages, which Columbus diſcovered. He made known a new hemiſphere, of greater extent than either Europe, or Aſia, or Africa, the three noted diviſions of the ancient continent, and not much inferior in dimenſions to a third part of the habitable globe.

America is remarkable not only for its magnitude, but for its poſition. It ſtretches from the northern polar circle to a high ſouthern latitude, above fifteen hundred miles beyond the fartheſt extremity of the old continent on that ſide of the line. A country of ſuch extent paſſes through all the climates capable of becoming the habitation of man, and fit for yielding the various productions peculiar either to the temperate or to the torrid regions of the earth.

[a] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 16.

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NEXT to the extent of the New World, the grandeur of the objects which it preſents to view is moſt apt to ſtrike the eye of an obſerver. Nature ſeems here to have carried on her operations with a bolder hand, and to have diſtinguiſhed the features of this country by a peculiar magnificence. The mountains of America are much ſuperior in height to thoſe in the other diviſions of the globe. Even the plain of Quito, which may be conſidered as the baſe of the Andes, is elevated farther above the ſea than the top of the Pyrenees. This ſtupendous ridge of the Andes, no leſs remarkable for extent than elevation, riſes in different places more than one-third above the Pike of Teneriffe, the higheſt land in the ancient hemiſphere. The Andes may literally be ſaid to hide their heads in the clouds; the ſtorms often roll, and the thunder burſts below their ſummits, which, though expoſed to the rays of the ſun in the centre of the torrid zone, are covered with everlaſting ſnows [b].

Grand objects it preſents to view.

Its mountains;

FROM thoſe lofty mountains deſcend rivers proportionally large, with which the ſtreams in the ancient continent are not to be compared, either for length of courſe, or the vaſt body of water which they roll towards the ocean. The Maragnon, the Orinoco, the Plata, in South America, the Miſſiſippi and St. Laurence in North America, flow in ſuch ſpacious channels, that, long before they feel the influence of the tide, they reſemble arms of the ſea rather than rivers of freſh water [c].

rivers;

THE lakes of the New World are no leſs conſpicuous for grandeur than its mountains and rivers. There is nothing in other parts of the globe which

lakes.

[b] See NOTE I. [c] See NOTE II.

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reſembles the prodigious chain of lakes in North America. They may properly be termed inland ſeas of freſh water; and even thoſe of the ſecond or third claſs in magnitude, are of larger circuit than the greateſt lake of the ancient continent.

Its form favourable to commerce.

THE New World is of a form extremely favourable to commercial intercourſe. When a continent, like Africa, is compoſed of one vaſt ſolid maſs, unbroken by arms of the ſea penetrating into its interior parts, with few large rivers, and thoſe at a conſiderable diſtance from each other, the greater part of it ſeems deſtined to remain for ever uncivilized, and to be debarred from any active or enlarged communication with the reſt of mankind. When, like Europe, a continent is opened by inlets of the ocean of vaſt extent, ſuch as the Mediterranean and Baltic; or when, like Aſia, its coaſt is broken by deep bays advancing far into the country, ſuch as the Black Sea, the gulfs of Arabia, of Perſia, of Bengal, of Siam, and of Leotang; when the ſurrounding ſeas are filled with large and fertile iſlands, and the continent itſelf watered with a variety of navigable rivers, thoſe regions may be ſaid to poſſeſs whatever can facilitate the progreſs of their inhabitants in commerce and improvement. In all theſe reſpects America may bear a compariſon with the other quarters of the globe. The gulf of Mexico, which flows in between North and South America, may be conſidered as a Mediterranean ſea, which opens a maritime commerce with all the fertile countries by which it is encircled. The iſlands ſcattered in it are inferior only to thoſe in the Indian Archipelago, in number, in magnitude, and in value. As we ſtretch along the northern diviſion of the American hemiſphere, the Bay of Cheſapeak preſents a ſpacious inlet, which conducts the

the navigator far into the interior parts of provinces no leſs fertile than extenſive; and if ever the progreſs of culture and population ſhall mitigate the extreme rigour of the climate in the more northern diſtricts of America, Hudſon's Bay may become as ſubſervient to commercial intercourſe in that quarter of the globe, as the Baltic is in Europe. The other great portion of the New World is encompaſſed on every ſide by the ſea, except one narrow neck, which ſeparates the Atlantic from the Pacific Ocean; and though it be not opened by ſpacious bays or arms of the ſea, its interior parts are rendered acceſſible by a number of large rivers, fed by ſo many auxiliary ſtreams, flowing in ſuch various directions, that, without any aid from the hand of induſtry and art, an inland navigation may be carried on through all the provinces from the river de la Plata to the gulf of Paria. Nor is this bounty of nature confined to the ſouthern diviſion of America; its northern continent abounds no leſs in rivers which are navigable almoſt to their ſources, and by its immenſe chain of lakes proviſion is made for an inland communication, more extenſive and commodious than in any quarter of the globe. The countries ſtretching from the gulf of Darien on one ſide, to that of California on the other, which form the chain that binds the two parts of the American continent together, are not deſtitute of peculiar advantages. Their coaſt on one ſide is waſhed by the Atlantic Ocean, on the other by the Pacific. Some of their rivers flow into the former, ſome into the latter, and ſecure to them all the commercial benefits that may reſult from a communication with both.

Temperature of its climate.

BUT what moſt diſtinguiſhes America from other parts of the earth, is the peculiar temperature of its climate,

BOOK IV. climate, and the different laws to which it is ſubject with reſpect to the diſtribution of heat and cold. We cannot determine preciſely the portion of heat felt in any part of the globe, merely by meaſuring its diſtance from the equator. The climate of a country is affected, in ſome degree, by its elevation above the ſea, by the extent of continent, by the nature of the ſoil, the height of adjacent mountains, and many other circumſtances. The influence of theſe, however, is, from various cauſes, leſs conſiderable in the greater part of the ancient continent; and from knowing the poſition of any country there, we can pronounce with more certainty what will be the warmth of its climate, and the nature of its productions.

Predominance of cold.

THE maxims which are founded upon obſervation of our hemiſphere will not apply to the other. There, cold predominates. The rigour of the frigid zone extends over half of that which ſhould be temperate by its poſition. Countries where the grape and the fig ſhould ripen, are buried under ſnow one half of the year; and lands ſituated in the ſame parallel with the moſt fertile and beſt cultivated provinces in Europe, are chilled with perpetual froſts, which almoſt deſtroy the power of vegetation [d]. As we advance to thoſe parts of America which lie in the ſame parallel with provinces of Aſia and Africa, bleſſed with an uniform enjoyment of ſuch genial warmth as is moſt friendly to life and vegetation, the dominion of cold continues to be felt, and winter, though during a ſhort period, often reigns with extreme ſeverity. If we proceed along the American continent into the torrid zone, we ſhall find the cold prevalent in the New World extending itſelf alſo

[d] See NOTE III.

to

to this region of the globe, and mitigating the exceſs of its fervour. While the negro on the coaſt of Africa is ſcorched with unremitting heat, the inhabitant of Peru breathes an air equally mild and temperate, and is perpetually ſhaded under a canopy of grey clouds, which intercepts the fierce beams of the ſun, without obſtructing his friendly influence [e]. Along the eaſtern coaſt of America, the climate, though more ſimilar to that of the torrid zone in other parts of the earth, is nevertheleſs conſiderably milder than in thoſe countries of Aſia and Africa which lie in the ſame latitude. If from the ſouthern tropic we continue our progreſs to the extremity of the American continent, we meet with frozen ſeas, and countries horrid, barren, and ſcarcely habitable for cold, ſooner than in the north [f].

Cauſes of this.

VARIOUS cauſes combine in rendering the climate of America ſo extremely different from that of the ancient continent. Though the utmoſt extent of America towards the north be not yet diſcovered, we know that it advances nearer to the pole than either Europe or Aſia. The latter have large ſeas to the north, which are open during part of the year; and even when covered with ice, the wind that blows over them is leſs intenſely cold than that which blows over land in the ſame high latitudes. But in America the land ſtretches from the river St. Laurence towards the pole, and ſpreads out immenſely to the weſt. A chain of enormous mountains, covered with ſnow and ice, runs through all this dreary region. The wind,

[e] Voyage de Ulloa, tom. i. p. 453. Anſon's Voyage, p. 184.

[f] Anſon's Voyage, p. 74.; and Voyage de Quiros, chez Hiſt. Gen. des Voyages, tom. xiv. p. 83. Richard Hiſt. Natur. de l'Air, ii. 305, &c.

in

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in paſſing over ſuch an extent of high and frozen land, becomes ſo impregnated with cold, that it acquires a piercing keenneſs, which it retains in its progreſs through warmer climates, and is not entirely mitigated until it reach the Gulf of Mexico. Over all the continent of North America, a north-weſterly wind and exceſſive cold are ſynonymous terms. Even in the moſt ſultry weather, the moment that the wind veers to that quarter, its penetrating influence is felt in a tranſition from heat to cold, no leſs violent than ſudden. To this powerful cauſe we may aſcribe the extraordinary dominion of cold, and its violent inroads into the ſouthern provinces in that part of the globe [g].

OTHER cauſes, no leſs remarkable, diminiſh the active power of heat in thoſe parts of the American continent which lie between the tropics. In all that portion of the globe, the wind blows in an invariable direction from eaſt to weſt. As this wind holds its courſe acroſs the ancient continent, it arrives at the countries which ſtretch along the weſtern ſhore of Africa, inflamed with all the fiery particles which it hath collected from the ſultry plains of Aſia, and the burning ſands in the African deſarts. The coaſt of Africa is, accordingly, the region of the earth which feels the moſt fervent heat, and is expoſed to the unmitigated ardour of the torrid zone. But this ſame wind which brings ſuch an acceſſion of warmth to the countries lying between the river of Senegal and Cafraria, traverſes the Atlantic Ocean before it reaches the American ſhore. It is cooled in its paſſage over this vaſt body of water, and is felt as a refreſhing gale along the coaſts of Braſil [h], and Guiana, rendering theſe

[g] Charlevoix Hiſt. de Nov. Fr. iii. 165. Hiſt. generale Voyages, tom. xv. 215, &c.

[h] See NOTE IV.

countries,

countries, though among the warmeſt in America, temperate, when compared with thoſe which lie oppoſite to them in Africa [i]. As this wind advances in its courſe acroſs America, it meets with immenſe plains, covered with impenetrable foreſts, or occupied by large rivers, marſhes, and ſtagnating waters, where it can recover no conſiderable degree of heat. At length it arrives at the Andes, which run from north to ſouth through the whole continent. In paſſing over their elevated and frozen ſummits, it is ſo thoroughly cooled, that the greater part of the countries beyond them hardly feel the ardour to which they ſeem expoſed by their ſituation [k]. In the other provinces of America, from Tierra Firmè weſtward to the Mexican empire, the heat of the climate is tempered, in ſome places, by the elevation of the land above the ſea, in others, by their extraordinary humidity, and in all, by the enormous mountains ſcattered over this tract. The iſlands of America in the Torrid Zone are either ſmall or mountainous, and are fanned alternately by refreſhing ſea and land breezes.

THE cauſes of the extraordinary cold towards the ſouthern limits of America, and in the ſeas beyond it, cannot be aſcertained in a manner equally ſatisfying. It was long ſuppoſed that a vaſt continent, diſtinguiſhed by the name of *Terra Auſtralis Incognita*, lay between the ſouthern extremity of America and the Antarctic pole. The ſame principles which account for the extraordinary degree of cold in the northern regions of America, were employed in order to explain that which is felt at

[i] See NOTE V.

[k] Acoſta Hiſt. Novi Orbis, lib. ii. c. 11. Buffon Hiſt. Naturelle, &c. tom. ii. 512, &c. ix. 107, &c. Oſborn's Collect. of Voyages, ii. p. 868.

Cape

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Cape Horn and the adjacent countries. The immenſe extent of the ſouthern continent, and the large rivers which it poured into the ocean, were mentioned and admitted by philoſophers as cauſes ſufficient to occaſion the unuſual ſenſation of cold, and the ſtill more uncommon appearances of frozen ſeas in that region of the globe. But the imaginary continent to which ſuch influence was aſcribed, having been ſearched for in vain, and the ſpace which it was ſuppoſed to occupy having been found to be an open ſea, new conjectures muſt be formed with reſpect to the cauſes of a temperature of climate, ſo extremely different from that which we experience in countries removed at the ſame diſtance from the oppoſite pole [1].

Condition when firſt diſcovered.

AFTER contemplating thoſe permanent and characteriſtic qualities of the American continent, which ariſe from the peculiarity of its ſituation, and the diſpoſition of its parts, the next object that merits attention is its condition when firſt diſcovered, as far as that depended upon the induſtry and operations of man. The effects of human ingenuity and labour are more extenſive and conſiderable, than even our own vanity is apt at firſt to imagine. When we ſurvey the face of the habitable globe, no ſmall part of that fertility and beauty, which we aſcribe to the hand of Nature, is the work of man. His efforts, when continued through a ſucceſſion of ages, change the appearance and improve the qualities of the earth. As a great part of the ancient continent has long been occupied by nations far advanced in arts and induſtry, our eye is accuſtomed to view the earth in that form which it aſſumes when rendered fit to be the reſidence of a numerous race of men, and to ſupply them with nouriſhment.

[1] See NOTE VI.

BUT

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Rude and uncultivated.

But in the New World, the ſtate of mankind was ruder, and the aſpect of Nature extremely different. Throughout all its vaſt regions, there were only two monarchies remarkable for extent of territory, or diſtinguiſhed by any progreſs in improvement. The reſt of this continent was poſſeſſed by ſmall independent tribes, deſtitute of arts and induſtry, and neither capable to correct the defects, nor deſirous to meliorate the condition of that part of the earth allotted to them for their habitation. Countries, occupied by ſuch people, were almoſt in the ſame ſtate as if they had been without inhabitants. Immenſe foreſts covered a great part of the uncultivated earth; and as the hand of induſtry had not taught the rivers to run in a proper channel, or drained off the ſtagnating water, many of the moſt fertile plains were overflowed with inundations, or converted into marſhes. In the ſouthern provinces, where the warmth of the ſun, the moiſture of the climate, and the fertility of the ſoil, combine in calling forth the moſt vigorous powers of vegetation, the woods are ſo choked with its rank luxuriance, as to be almoſt impervious, and the ſurface of the ground is hid from the eye under a thick covering of ſhrubs and herbs and weeds. In this ſtate of wild unaſſiſted nature, a great part of the large provinces in South America, which extend from the bottom of the Andes to the ſea, ſtill remain. The European colonies have cleared and cultivated a few ſpots along the coaſt, but the original inabitants, as rude and indolent as ever, have done nothing to open or improve a country, poſſeſſing almoſt every advantage of ſituation and climate. As we advance towards the northern provinces of America, Nature continues to wear the ſame uncultivated aſpect, and in proportion as the rigour of the climate increaſes, appears more deſolate and horrid. There, the foreſts, though not encumbered

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encumbered with the ſame exuberance of vegetation, are of equal extent; prodigious marſhes overſpread the plains, and few marks appear of human activity in any attempt to cultivate or embelliſh the earth. No wonder that the colonies ſent from Europe were aſtoniſhed at their firſt entrance into the New World. It appeared to them waſte, ſolitary, and uninviting. When the Engliſh began to ſettle in America, they termed the countries of which they took poſſeſſion, *The Wilderneſs*. Nothing but their eager expectation of finding mines of gold, could have induced the Spaniards to penetrate through the woods and marſhes of America, where, at every ſtep, they obſerved the extreme difference between the uncultivated face of Nature, and that which it acquires under the forming hand of induſtry and art [m].

Unwholeſome.

THE labour and operations of man not only improve and embelliſh the earth, but render it more wholeſome, and friendly to life. When any region lies neglected and deſtitute of cultivation, the air ſtagnates in the woods, putrid exhalations ariſe from the waters; the ſurface of the earth, loaded with rank vegetation, feels not the purifying influence of the ſun; the malignity of the diſtempers natural to the climate increaſes, and new maladies no leſs noxious are engendered. Accordingly, all the provinces of America, when firſt diſcovered, were found to be remarkably unhealthy. This the Spaniards experienced in every expedition into the New World, whether deſtined for conqueſt or ſettlement. Though by the natural conſtitution of their bodies, their habitual temperance, and the perſevering vigour of their minds, they were as much formed as any people in Europe for active

[m] See NOTE VII.

ſervice

ſervice in a ſultry climate, they felt ſeverely the fatal and pernicious qualities of thoſe uncultivated regions through which they marched, or where they endeavoured to plant colonies. Great numbers were cut off by the unknown and violent diſeaſes with which they were infected. Such as ſurvived the deſtructive rage of thoſe maladies, were not exempted from the noxious effects of the climate. They returned to Europe, according to the deſcription of the early Spaniſh hiſtorians, feeble, emaciated, with languid looks, and complexions of ſuch a ſickly yellow colour, as indicated the unwholeſome temperature of the countries where they had reſided [n].

Its animals.

THE uncultivated ſtate of the New World affected not only the temperature of the air, but the qualities of its productions. The principle of life ſeems to have been leſs active and vigorous there, than in the ancient continent. Notwithſtanding the vaſt extent of America, and the variety of its climates, the different ſpecies of animals peculiar to it are much fewer in proportion, than thoſe of the other hemiſphere. In the iſlands, there were only four kinds of quadrupeds known, the largeſt of which did not exceed the ſize of a rabbit. On the continent, the variety was greater, and though the individuals of each kind could not fail of multiplying exceedingly, when almoſt unmoleſted by men, who were neither ſo numerous, nor ſo united in ſociety, as to be formidable enemies to the animal creation, the number of diſtinct ſpecies muſt ſtill be conſidered as extremely ſmall. Of two hundred different kinds of animals ſpread over the face of the earth, only about one-third exiſted in America, at the time of its diſcovery [o]. Nature was

[n] Gomara Hiſt. c. 20. 22. Oviedo Hiſt. lib. ii. c. 13. lib. v. c. 10. P. Mart. Epiſt. 545. Decad. p. 176.

[o] Buffon Hiſt. Naturelle, tom. ix. p. 86.

not

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not only leſs prolific in the New World, but ſhe appears likewiſe to have been leſs vigorous in her productions. The animals originally belonging to this quarter of the globe appear to be of an inferior race, neither ſo robuſt, nor ſo fierce, as thoſe of the other continent. America gives birth to no creature of ſuch bulk as to be compared with the elephant or rhinoceros, or that equals the lion and tyger in ſtrength and ferocity [p]. The *Tapyr* of Braſil, the quadruped of the firſt magnitude in the New World, is not larger than a calf of ſix months old. The *Puma* and *Jaguar*, its fierceſt beaſts of prey, which the Europeans have inaccurately denominated lions and tygers, poſſeſs neither the undaunted courage of the former, nor the ravenous cruelty of the latter [q]. They are inactive and timid, hardly formidable to man, and often turn their backs upon the leaſt appearance of reſiſtance [r]. The ſame qualities in the climate of America which ſtinted the growth, and enfeebled the ſpirit, of its native animals, have proved pernicious to ſuch as have migrated into it voluntarily from the other continent, or have been tranſported thither by the Europeans [s]. The bears, the wolves, the deer of America, are not equal in ſize to thoſe of the Old World [t]. Moſt of the domeſtic animals, with which the Europeans ſtored the provinces wherein they ſettled, have degenerated with reſpect either to bulk or quality, in a country whoſe temperature

[p] See NOTE VIII.

[q] Buffon Hiſt. Natur. tom. ix. p. 87. Margravii Hiſt. Nat. Braſil, p. 229.

[r] Buffon Hiſt. Natur. ix. 13. 203. Acoſta Hiſt. lib. iv. c. 34. Piſonis Hiſt. p. 6. Herrera, dec. 4. lib. iv. c. 1. lib. x. c. 13.

[s] Churchill, v. p. 691. Ovalle Relat. of Chili Church. iii. p. 10. Sommario de Oviedo, c. 14—22. Voyage du Des Marchais, iii. 299.

[t] Buffon Hiſt. Natur. ix. 103. Kalm Travels, i. 102. Biet Voy. de France Equinox. p. 339.

and

and ſoil ſeem to be leſs favourable to the ſtrength and perfection of the animal creation [u].

Insects and reptiles.

THE ſame cauſes, which checked the growth and the vigour of the more noble animals, were friendly to the propagation and increaſe of reptiles and inſects. Though this is not peculiar to the New World, and thoſe odious tribes, the offspring of heat, moiſture, and corruption, infeſt every part of the torrid zone; they multiply faſter, perhaps, in America, and grow to a more monſtrous bulk. As this country is, on the whole, leſs cultivated, and leſs peopled, than the other quarters of the earth, the active principle of life waſtes its force in productions of this inferior form. The air is often darkened with clouds of inſects, and the ground covered with ſhocking and noxious reptiles. The country around Porto-Bello ſwarms with toads in ſuch multitudes, as hide the ſurface of the earth. At Guyaquil, ſnakes and vipers are hardly leſs numerous. Carthagena is infeſted with numerous flocks of bats, which annoy not only the cattle but inhabitants [x]. In the iſlands, legions of ants have, at different times, conſumed every vegetable production [y], and left the earth entirely bare, as if it had been burnt with fire. The damp foreſts, and rank ſoil of the countries on the banks of the Orinoco and Maragnon, teem with almoſt every offenſive and poiſonous creature, which the power of a ſultry ſun can quicken into life [z].

[u] See NOTE IX.

[x] Voyage de Ulloa, tom. i. p. 89. Id. p. 147. Herrera, dec. 11. lib. iii. c. 3. 19.

[y] See NOTE X.

[z] Voyage de Condamine, p. 167. Cumilla, iii. 120, &c. Hiſt. gener. des Voyages, xiv. 317. Dumont Memoires ſur la Louiſiane, i. 108. Sommario de Oviedo, c. 52—62.

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Birds.

THE birds of the New World are not diſtinguiſhed by qualities ſo conſpicuous and characteriſtical, as thoſe which we have obſerved in its quadrupeds. Birds are more independent of man, and leſs affected by the changes which his induſtry and labour make upon the ſtate of the earth. They have a greater propenſity to migrate from one country to another, and can gratify this inſtinct of their nature without difficulty or danger. Hence the number of birds common to both continents is much greater than that of quadrupeds; and even ſuch as are peculiar to America nearly reſemble thoſe with which mankind were acquainted in ſimilar regions of the ancient hemiſphere. The American birds of the torrid zone, like thoſe of the ſame climate in Aſia and Africa, are decked in plumage, which dazzles the eye with the vivid beauty of its colours, but nature, ſatisfied with clothing them in this gay dreſs, has denied moſt of them that melody of ſound, and variety of notes, which catches and delights the ear. The birds of the temperate climates there, in the ſame manner as in our continent, are leſs ſplendid in their appearance, but, in compenſation for that defect, have all the power and ſweetneſs of muſic in their voice. In ſome diſtricts of America, the unwholeſome temperature of the air ſeems to be unfavourable even to this part of the creation. The number of birds is leſs than in other countries, and the traveller is ſtruck with the amazing ſolitude and ſilence of its foreſts [a]. It is remarkable, however, that America, where the quadrupeds are ſo dwarfiſh and daſtardly, ſhould produce the *Condor*,

[a] Bouguer Voy. au Perou, 17. Chanvalon, Voyage a la Martinique, p. 96. Warren Deſcript. Surinam. Oſborn's Collect. ii. 924. Lettres Edif. xxiv. p. 339. Charlev. Hiſt. de la Nouv. France, iii. 155.

which

which is intitled to pre-eminence over all the flying tribe, in bulk, in ſtrength, and in courage [b].

Soil.

THE ſoil, in a continent ſo extenſive as America, muſt of courſe be extremely various. In each of its provinces, we ſhall find ſome diſtinguiſhing peculiarity, the deſcription of which belongs to thoſe who write their particular hiſtory. In general, we may obſerve, that the moiſture and cold, which predominate ſo remarkably in all parts of America, muſt have great influence upon the nature of its ſoil; countries lying in the ſame parallel with thoſe regions which never feel the extreme rigour of winter in the ancient continent, are frozen over in America during a great part of the year. Chilled by this intenſe cold, the ground never acquires warmth ſufficient to ripen the fruits, which are found in the correſponding parts of the other continent. If we would rear in America the productions which abound in any particular diſtrict of the world, we muſt advance ſeveral degrees nearer to the line, than in the other hemiſphere, as it requires ſuch an increaſe of heat to counterbalance the natural frigidity of the ſoil and climate [c]. At the Cape of Good Hope, ſeveral of the plants, and fruits peculiar to the countries within the tropics, are cultivated with ſucceſs; whereas, at St. Auguſtine, in Florida, and Charles-Town, in South-Carolina, though conſiderably nearer the line, they cannot be brought to thrive with equal certainty [d]. But, if allowance be made for this diverſity, the ſoil of America is naturally as rich and fertile as in any part of the earth. As the country was thinly inhabited, and by a people of little induſ-

[b] Voyage de Ulloa, i. 363. Voyage de Condamine, 175. Buffon Hiſt. Nat. xvi. 184. Voyage du Des Marchais, iii. 320.

[c] See NOTE XI.

[d] See NOTE XII.

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try, who had none of the domeſtic animals, which civilized nations rear in ſuch vaſt numbers, the earth was not exhauſted by their conſumption. The vegetable productions, to which its fertility gave birth, often remained untouched, and being ſuffered to corrupt on its ſurface, returned with increaſe into its boſom [e]. As trees and plants derive a great part of their nouriſhment from air and water, if they were not deſtroyed by man and other animals, they would render to the earth more, perhaps, than they take from it, and feed rather than impoveriſh it. Thus the unoccupied ſoil of America might go on enriching for many ages. The vaſt number as well as enormous ſize of the trees in America, indicate the extraordinary vigour of the ſoil in its native ſtate. When the Europeans firſt began to cultivate the New World, they were aſtoniſhed at the luxuriant power of vegetation in its virgin mould; and in ſeveral places the ingenuity of the planter is ſtill employed in diminiſhing and waſting its ſuperfluous fertility, in order to bring it down to a ſtate fit for uſeful culture [f].

How was America peopled?

HAVING thus ſurveyed the ſtate of the New World at the time of its diſcovery, and conſidered the peculiar features and qualities which diſtinguiſh and characteriſe it, the next inquiry that merits attention is, How was America peopled? By what courſe did mankind migrate from the one continent to the other? and in what quarter is it moſt probable that a communication was opened between them?

[e] Buffon, Hiſt. Natur. i. 242. Kalm, i. 151.

[f] Charlevoix, Hiſt. de Nouv. Fran. iii. 405. Voyage du Des Marchais, iii. 229. Lery ap De Bry, part iii. p. 174. See NOTE XIII.

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No tradition concerning it among themſelves.

We know, with infallible certainty, that all the human race ſpring from the ſame ſource, and that the deſcendants of one man, under the protection as well as in obedience to the command of Heaven, multiplied and repleniſhed the earth. But neither the annals nor the traditions of nations reach back to thoſe remote ages, in which they took poſſeſſion of the different countries where they are now ſettled. We cannot trace the branches of this firſt family, or point out with certainty the time and manner in which they divided and ſpread over the face of the globe. Even among the moſt enlightened people, the period of authentic hiſtory is extremely ſhort, and every thing prior to that is fabulous or obſcure. It is not ſurpriſing, then, that the unlettered inhabitants of America, who have no ſolicitude about futurity, and little curioſity concerning what is paſt, ſhould be altogether unacquainted with their own original. The Californians and Eſkimaux, in particular, who occupy thoſe countries in America which approach neareſt to the ancient continent, are ſo remarkably rude, that it is altogether vain to ſearch among them for ſuch information as might diſcover the place from whence they came, or the anceſtors of whom they are deſcended [f]. Whatever light has been thrown on this ſubject, is derived, not from the natives of America, but from the inquiſitive genius of their conquerors.

Various theories.

When the people of Europe unexpectedly diſcovered a New World, removed at a vaſt diſtance from every part of the ancient continent which was then known, and filled with inhabitants whoſe appearance and manners differed remarkably from the reſt of the human ſpecies, the queſtion concern-

[f] Venegas Hiſt. of California, i. 60.

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ing their original became naturally an object of curioſity and attention. The theories and ſpeculations of ingenious men with reſpect to this ſubject, would fill many volumes; but are often ſo wild and chimerical, that I ſhould offer an inſult to the underſtanding of my readers, if I attempted either to enumerate or to refute them. Some have preſumptuouſly imagined that the people of America were not the offſpring of the ſame common parent with the reſt of mankind, but that they formed a ſeparate race of men, diſtinguiſhable by peculiar features in the conſtitution of their bodies, as well as in the characteriſtic qualities of their minds. Others contend, that they are deſcended from ſome remnant of the antediluvian inhabitants of the earth, who ſurvived the deluge, which ſwept away the greateſt part of the human ſpecies in the days of Noah; and prepoſterouſly ſuppoſe rude, uncivilized tribes, ſcattered over an uncultivated continent, to be the moſt ancient race of people on the earth. There is hardly any nation from the north to the ſouth pole, to which ſome antiquary, in the extravagance of conjecture, has not aſcribed the honour of peopling America. The Jews, the Canaanites, the Phœnicians, the Carthaginians, the Greeks, the Scythians in ancient times, are ſuppoſed to have ſettled in this weſtern world. The Chineſe, the Swedes, the Norwegians, the Welſh, the Spaniards, are ſaid to have ſent colonies thither in later ages, at different periods, and on various occaſions. Zealous advocates ſtand forth to ſupport the reſpective claims of thoſe people; and though they reſt upon no better foundation than the caſual reſemblance of ſome cuſtoms, or the ſuppoſed affinity between a few words in their different languages, much erudition and more zeal have been employed, to little purpoſe, in defence of the oppoſite ſyſtems. Thoſe regions of conjecture and controverſy belong not to the hiſtorian.

His

His is a more limited province, confined to what is eſtabliſhed by certain or highly probable evidence. Beyond this I ſhall not venture, in offering a few obſervations, which may contribute to throw ſome light upon this curious and much agitated queſtion.

Ought not to be founded on mere conjecture,

1. THERE are authors who have endeavoured by mere conjectures to account for the peopling of America. Some have ſuppoſed that it was originally united to the ancient continent, and disjoined from it by the ſhock of an earthquake, or the irruption of a deluge. Others have imagined, that ſome veſſel being forced from its courſe by the violence of a weſterly wind, might be driven by accident towards the American coaſt, and have given a beginning to population in that deſolate continent [g]. But with reſpect to all thoſe ſyſtems, it is vain either to reaſon or inquire, becauſe it is impoſſible to come to any deciſion. Such events as they ſuppoſe are barely poſſible, and may have happened. That they ever did happen, we have no evidence, either from the clear teſtimony of hiſtory or from the obſcure intimations of tradition.

or on reſemblance of manners,

2. NOTHING can be more frivolous or uncertain than the attempts to diſcover the original of the Americans, merely by tracing the reſemblance between their manners and thoſe of any particular people in the ancient continent. If we ſuppoſe two bodies of men, though in the moſt remote regions of the globe, to be placed in a ſtate of ſociety ſimilar

[g] Parſon's Remains of Japhet, p. 240. Ancient Univerſ. Hiſt. vol. xx. p. 164. P. Feyjoo Teatro Critico, tom. v. p. 304. &c. Acoſta Hiſt. Moral. Novi Orbis, lib. i. c. 16. 19.

in

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in its degree of improvement, they muſt feel the ſame wants, and exert the ſame endeavours to ſupply them. The ſame objects will allure, the ſame paſſions will animate them, and the ſame ideas and ſentiments will ariſe in their minds. The character and occupations of the hunter in America muſt be little different from thoſe of an Aſiatic, who depends for ſubſiſtence on the chace. A tribe of ſavages on the banks of the Danube muſt nearly reſemble one upon the plains waſhed by the Miſſiſippi. Inſtead then of preſuming, from this ſimilarity, that there is any affinity between them, we ſhould only conclude, that the diſpoſition and manners of men are formed by their ſituation, and ariſe from the ſtate and ſociety in which they live. The moment that begins to vary, the character of a people muſt change. In proportion as it advances in improvement, their manners refine, their powers and talents are called forth. In every part of the earth the progreſs of man hath been nearly the ſame, and we can trace him in his career from the rude ſimplicity of ſavage life, until he attains the induſtry, the arts, and the elegance of poliſhed ſociety. There is nothing wonderful then in the ſimilitude between the Americans and the barbarous nations of our continent. Had Lafitau, Garcia, and many other authors, attended to this, they would not have perplexed a ſubject which they pretend to illuſtrate, by their fruitleſs endeavours to eſtabliſh an affinity between various races of people in the old and new continents, upon no other evidence than ſuch a reſemblance in their manners as neceſſarily ariſes from the ſimilarity of their condition. There are, it is true, among every people ſome cuſtoms, which, as they do not flow from any natural want or deſire peculiar to their ſituation, may be denominated uſages of arbitrary inſtitution. If between two nations ſettled in remote

parts

parts of the earth, a perfect agreement with reſpect to any of theſe ſhould be diſcovered, one might be led to ſuſpect that they were connected by ſome affinity. If a nation were found in America that conſecrated the ſeventh day to religious reſt, if in another the firſt appearance of the new moon was celebrated with feſtivity, we might juſtly ſuppoſe that the former had derived its knowledge of this uſage of arbitrary inſtitutions from the Jews, while the latter might be conſidered as nothing more than an expreſſion of joy natural to man on the return of the planet which guides and cheers him in the night. The inſtances of cuſtoms, merely arbitrary, common to the inhabitants of both hemiſpheres, are, indeed, ſo few and ſo equivocal, that no theory concerning the population of the New World ought to be founded upon them.

or of religious rites.

3. THE theories which have been formed with reſpect to the original of the Americans, from obſervation of their religious rites and practices, are no leſs fanciful, and deſtitute of ſolid foundation. When the religious opinions of any people are neither the reſult of rational inquiry, nor derived from the inſtructions of revelation, they muſt needs be wild and extravagant. Barbarous nations are incapable of the former, and have not been bleſſed with the advantages ariſing from the latter. Still, however, the human mind, even where its operations appear moſt wild and capricious, holds a courſe ſo regular, that in every age and country the dominion of particular paſſions will be attended with ſimilar effects. The ſavage of Europe or America, when filled with ſuperſtitious dread of inviſible beings, or with inquiſitive ſolicitude to penetrate into the events of futurity, trembles alike with fear, or glows with impatience. He has recourſe to rites and practices of the ſame kind,

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kind, in order to avert the vengeance which he ſuppoſes to be impending over him, or to divine the ſecret which is the object of his curioſity. Accordingly, the ritual of ſuperſtition, in one continent, ſeems, in many particulars, to be a tranſcript of that eſtabliſhed in the other, and both authoriſe ſimilar inſtitutions, ſometimes ſo frivolous as to excite pity, ſometimes ſo bloody and barbarous as to create horror. But without ſuppoſing any conſanguinity between ſuch diſtant nations, or imagining that their religious ceremonies were conveyed by tradition from the one to the other, we may aſcribe this uniformity, which in many inſtances ſeems very amazing, to the natural operation of ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm upon the weakneſs of the human mind.

Not peopled by any nation highly civilized,

4. We may lay it down as a certain principle in this inquiry, that America was not peopled by any nation of the ancient continent, which had made conſiderable progreſs in civilization. The inhabitants of the New World were in a ſtate of ſociety ſo extremely rude, as to be unacquainted with thoſe arts which are the firſt eſſays of human ingenuity in its advance towards improvement. Even the moſt cultivated nations of America were ſtrangers to many of thoſe ſimple inventions, which were almoſt coeval with ſociety in other parts of the world, and were known in the earlieſt periods of civil life. From this it is manifeſt, that the tribes which originally migrated to America, came off from nations which muſt have been no leſs barbarous than their poſterity, at the time when they were firſt diſcovered by the Europeans. For, although the elegant and refined arts may decline or periſh, amidſt the violent ſhocks of thoſe revolutions and diſaſters to which nations are expoſed, the neceſſary arts of life, when once they have been introduced among any people,

people, are never loſt. None of the viciſſitudes in human affairs affect theſe, and they continue to be practiſed as long as the race of men exiſts. If ever the uſe of iron had been known to the ſavages of America, or to their progenitors, if ever they had employed a plough, a loom, or a forge, the utility of theſe inventions would have preſerved them, and it is impoſſible that they ſhould have been abandoned or forgotten. We may conclude then, that the Americans ſprung from ſome people, who were themſelves in ſuch an early and unimproved ſtage of ſociety, as to be unacquainted with all the neceſſary arts, which remained unknown among their poſterity.

nor from the ſouthern regions of our continent.

5. It appears no leſs evident, that America was not peopled by any colony from the more ſouthern nations of the ancient continent. None of the rude tribes ſettled in that part of our hemiſphere can be ſuppoſed to have viſited a country ſo remote. They poſſeſſed neither enterpriſe, nor ingenuity, nor power, that could prompt them to undertake, or enable them to perform, ſuch a diſtant voyage. That the more civilized nations in Aſia or Africa are not the progenitors of the Americans is manifeſt, not only from the obſervations which I have already made concerning their ignorance of the moſt ſimple and neceſſary arts, but from an additional circumſtance. Whenever any people have experienced the advantages which men enjoy, by their dominion over the inferior animals, they can neither ſubſiſt without the nouriſhment which they afford, nor carry on their operations independent of their miniſtry and labour. Accordingly, the firſt care of the Spaniards when they ſettled in America, was to ſtock it with all the domeſtic animals of Europe, and if prior to them, the Tyrians, the Carthaginians, the Chineſe, or any other poliſhed

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liſhed people, had taken poſſeſſion of that continent, we ſhould have found there the animals peculiar to thoſe regions of the globe where they were originally ſeated. In all America, however, there is not one animal, tame or wild, which properly belongs to the warm, or even the more temperate countries of the ancient continent. The camel, the dromedary, the horſe, the cow, were as much unknown in America, as the elephant or the lion. From which it is obvious, that the people who firſt ſettled in the weſtern world did not iſſue from the countries where thoſe animals abound, and where men, from having been long accuſtomed to their aid, would naturally conſider it, not only as beneficial, but as indiſpenſably neceſſary to the improvement, and even the preſervation, of civil ſociety.

The two continents ſeem to be moſt contiguous towards the north.

6. From conſidering the animals with which America is ſtored, we may conclude that the neareſt point of contact between the old and new continents is towards the northern extremity of both, and that there the communication was opened, and the intercourſe carried on between them. All the extenſive countries in America which lie within the tropics, or approach near to them, are filled with indigenous animals of various kinds, entirely different from thoſe in the correſponding regions of the ancient continent. But the northern provinces of the New World abound with many of the wild animals which are common in ſuch parts of our hemiſphere as lie in a ſimilar ſituation. The bear, the wolf, the fox, the hare, the deer, the roebuck, the elk, and ſeveral other ſpecies frequent the foreſts of North America, no leſs than thoſe in the north of Europe and Aſia [b]. It ſeems to be evident then, that the two continents approach each

[b] Buffon Hiſt. Nat. ix. p. 97, &c.

other

other in this quarter, and are either united, or ſo nearly adjacent, that theſe animals might paſs from the one to the other.

This aſcertained by diſcovery.

7. The actual vicinity of the two continents is ſo clearly eſtabliſhed by modern diſcoveries, as removes the chief difficulty with reſpect to the peopling of America. While thoſe immenſe regions, which ſtretched eaſtward from the river Oby to the ſea of Kamchatka were unknown, or imperfectly explored, the north-eaſt extremities of our hemiſphere were ſuppoſed to be ſo far diſtant from any part of the New World, that it was not eaſy to conceive how any communication ſhould have been carried on between them. But the Ruſſians, having ſubjected the weſtern part of Siberia to their empire, gradually extended their knowledge of that vaſt country, by advancing towards the eaſt into unknown provinces. Theſe were diſcovered by hunters in their excurſions after game, or by ſoldiers employed in levying the taxes, and the court of Moſcow eſtimated the importance of thoſe countries only by the ſmall addition which they made to its revenue. At length, Peter the Great aſcended the Ruſſian throne. His enlightened, comprehenſive mind, intent upon every circumſtance that could aggrandize his empire, or render his reign illuſtrious, diſcerned conſequences of thoſe diſcoveries, which had eſcaped the obſervation of his ignorant predeceſſors. He perceived, that in proportion as the regions of Aſia extended towards the eaſt, they muſt approach nearer to America; that the communication between the two continents, which had long been ſearched for in vain, would probably be found in this quarter, and that by opening this intercourſe, ſome part of the wealth and commerce of the weſtern world might be made to flow into his dominions by a new channel. Such

an

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an object ſuited a genius that delighted in grand ſchemes. Peter drew up inſtructions with his own hand for proſecuting this deſign, and gave orders for carrying it into execution [i].

His ſucceſſors adopted his ideas, and purſued his plan. The officers whom the Ruſſian court employed in this ſervice, had to ſtruggle with ſo many difficulties, that their progreſs was extremely ſlow. Encouraged by ſome faint traditions among the people of Siberia, concerning a ſucceſsful voyage in the year one thouſand ſix hundred and forty-eight, round the north-eaſt promontory of Aſia, they attempted to follow the ſame courſe. Veſſels were fitted out, with this view, at different times, from the rivers Lena and Kolyma; but in a frozen ocean, which nature ſeems not to have deſtined for navigation, they were expoſed to many diſaſters, without being able to accompliſh their purpoſe. No veſſel fitted out by the Ruſſian court ever doubled this formidable Cape [k]; we are indebted for what is known of thoſe extreme regions of Aſia, to the diſcoveries made in excurſions by land. In all thoſe provinces, an opinion prevails, that countries of great extent and fertility lie at no conſiderable diſtance from their own coaſts. Theſe the Ruſſians imagined to be part of America; and ſeveral circumſtances concurred not only in confirming them in this belief, but in perſuading them that ſome portion of that continent could not be very remote. Trees of various kinds, unknown in thoſe naked regions of Aſia, are driven upon the coaſt by an eaſterly wind. By the ſame wind, floating ice is brought thither in a few days; flights of birds arrive annually from the ſame quarter;

[i] Muller Voyages et Decouvertes par les Ruſſes, tom. i. p. 4, 5. 141.

[k] See NOTE XIV.

and

and a tradition obtains among the inhabitants, of an intercourſe formerly carried on with ſome countries ſituated to the eaſt. BOOK IV.

After weighing all theſe particulars, and comparing the poſition of the countries in Aſia which they had diſcovered, with ſuch parts in the north-weſt of America as were already known, the Ruſſian court formed a plan, which would have hardly occurred to any nation leſs accuſtomed to engage in arduous undertakings, and to contend with great difficulties. Orders were iſſued to build two veſſels at Ochotz, in the ſea of Kamchatka, to ſail on a voyage of diſcovery. Though that dreary uncultivated region furniſhed nothing that could be of uſe in conſtructing them, but ſome larch trees; though not only the iron, the cordage, the ſails, and all the numerous articles requiſite for their equipment, but the proviſions for victualling them, were to be carried through the immenſe deſerts of Siberia, along rivers of difficult navigation, and roads almoſt impaſſable, the mandate of the ſovereign, and the perſeverance of the people, at laſt ſurmounted every obſtacle. Two veſſels were finiſhed, and, under the command of the captains Behring and Tſchirikow, ſailed from Kamchatka in queſt of the New World, in a quarter where it had never been approached. They ſhaped their courſe towards the eaſt; and though a ſtorm ſoon ſeparated the veſſels, which never rejoined, and many diſaſters befell them, the expectations from the voyage were not altogether fruſtrated. Each of the commanders diſcovered land, which to them appeared to be part of the American continent; and, according to their obſervations, it ſeems to be ſituated within a few degrees of the north-weſt coaſt of California. Each ſet ſome of his people aſhore; but

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but in one place the inhabitants fled as the Ruſſians approached; in another, they carried off thoſe who landed, and deſtroyed their boats. The violence of the weather, and the diſtreſs of their crews, obliged both to quit this inhoſpitable coaſt. In their return they touched at ſeveral iſlands, which ſtretch in a chain from eaſt to weſt between the country which they had diſcovered and the coaſt of Aſia. They had ſome intercourſe with the natives, who ſeemed to them to reſemble the North Americans. They preſented to the Ruſſians the *calumet*, or pipe of peace, which is a ſymbol of friendſhip univerſal among the people of North America, and an uſage of arbitrary inſtitution, peculiar to them.

THE iſlands of this new Archipelago have been frequented by the Ruſſian hunters ſince that time; but the court ſeemed to have relinquiſhed its ſcheme of proſecuting diſcoveries in this quarter. It was unexpectedly reſumed in the year one thouſand ſeven hundred and ſixty-eight, and captain Krenitzin had the command of two ſmall veſſels fitted out for that purpoſe. In his voyage outward he held nearly the ſame courſe with the former navigators, he touched at the ſame iſlands, obſerved their ſituation and productions more carefully, and diſcovered ſeveral new iſlands, with which they had not fallen in. Though he did not proceed ſo far to the eaſt as to reviſit the country which Behring and Tſchirikow ſuppoſed to be part of the American continent, yet, by returning in a courſe conſiderably to the north of theirs, he corrected ſome capital miſtakes into which they had fallen, and has contributed to facilitate the progreſs of future navigators in thoſe ſeas [1].

[1] See NOTE XV.

THUS

THUS the poſſibility of a communication between the continents in this quarter reſts no longer upon mere conjecture, but is eſtabliſhed by undoubted evidence [m]. Some tribe, or ſome families of wandering Tartars, from the reſtleſs ſpirit peculiar to their race, might migrate to the neareſt iſlands, and, rude as their knowledge of navigation was, might, by paſſing from one to the other, reach at length the coaſt of America, and give a beginning to population in that continent. The diſtance between the Marian or Ladrone iſlands and the neareſt land in Aſia, is greater than that between the part of America which the Ruſſians diſcovered, and the coaſt of Kamchatka; and yet the inhabitants of thoſe iſlands are manifeſtly of Aſiatic extract. If, notwithſtanding their remote ſituation, we admit that the Marian iſlands were peopled from our continent, diſtance alone is no reaſon why we ſhould heſitate about admitting that the original of the Americans may be from the ſame ſource. It is probable that future navigators in thoſe ſeas, by ſteering farther to the north, may find that the continent of America approaches ſtill nearer to Aſia. According to the information of the barbarous people, who inhabit the country about the north-eaſt promontory of Aſia, there lies, off the coaſt, a ſmall iſland, to which they ſail in leſs than a day. From that, they can deſcry a large continent, which, according to their deſcription, is covered with foreſts, and poſſeſſed by people whoſe language they do not underſtand [n]. By them they are ſupplied with the ſkins of martens, an animal unknown in the northern parts of Siberia, and which is never found but in countries abounding with trees. If we could rely on this account,

[m] Muller's Voyages, tom. i. 248, &c. 267. 276.
[n] Muller's Voy. et Decouv. i. 166.

we

BOOK IV. we might conclude, that the American continent is ſeparated from ours only by a narrow ſtrait, and all the difficulties with reſpect to the communication between them would vaniſh. Perhaps the merit of aſcertaining this is reſerved for the ſovereign now ſeated on the throne of Peter the Great, who, by perfecting his plan, may add this ſplendid event to thoſe which already diſtinguiſh her reign.

Another communication by the north-weſt.

It is likewiſe evident from recent diſcoveries, that an intercourſe between our continent and America might be carried on with no leſs facility from the north-weſt extremities of Europe. As
A. D. 830. early as the ninth century, the Norwegians diſcovered Greenland, and planted colonies there. The communication with that country, after a long interruption, was renewed in the laſt century. Some Lutheran and Moravian miſſionaries, prompted by zeal for propagating the Chriſtian faith, have ventured to ſettle in this frozen and uncultivated region [o]. To them we are indebted for much curious information with reſpect to its nature and inhabitants. We learn, that the north-weſt coaſt of Greenland is ſeparated from America by a very narrow ſtrait; that, at the bottom of the bay into which this ſtrait conducts, it is highly probable that they are united [p]; that the inhabitants of the two countries have ſome intercourſe with one another; that the Eſquimaux of America perfectly reſemble the Greenlanders in their aſpect, dreſs, and mode of living; that ſome ſailors, who had acquired the knowledge of a few words in the Greenlandiſh language, reported that theſe were underſtood by the
A. D. 1764. Eſquimaux; that, at length, a Moravian miſſionary, well acquainted with the language of Greenland,

[o] Crantz Hiſt. of Greenl. i. 242. 244. Prevot Hiſt. Gen. des Voyages, tom. xv. 152, not. (96).

[p] Eggede, p. 2, 3.

having

having visited the country of the Esquimaux, found, to his astonishment, that they spoke the same language with the Greenlanders, and were in every respect the same people, and he was accordingly received and entertained by them as a friend and a brother [q].

By these decisive facts, not only the consanguinity of the Esquimaux and Greenlanders is established, but the possibility of peopling America from the north of Europe is demonstrated. If the Norwegians, in a barbarous age, when science had not begun to dawn in the north of Europe, possessed such naval skill as to open a communication with Greenland, their ancestors, as much addicted to roving by sea, as the Tartars are to wandering by land, might at some more remote period, accomplish the same voyage, and settle a colony there, whose descendents might, in progress of time, migrate into America. But if, instead of venturing to sail directly from their own coast to Greenland, we suppose that the Norwegians held a more cautious course, and advanced from Shetland to the Feroe Islands, and from them to Iceland, in all which they had planted colonies, their progress may have been so gradual, that this navigation cannot be considered as either longer or more hazardous, than those voyages which that hardy and enterprising race of men is known to have performed in every age.

8. THOUGH it be possible that America may have received its first inhabitants from our continent, either by the north-west of Europe or the north-east of Asia, there seems to be good reason for supposing that the progenitors of all the American nations, from Cape Horn to the southern con- Probably peopled from the north-east.

[q] Crantz' Hist. of Greenl. p. 261, 262.

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fines of Labrador, migrated from the latter rather than the former. The Eſquimaux are the only people in America, who, in their aſpect or character, bear any reſemblance to the northern Europeans. They are manifeſtly a ſeparate ſpecies of men, diſtinct from all the nations of that continent, in language, in diſpoſition, and in habits of life. Their original, then, may warrantably be traced up to that ſource, which I have pointed out. But, among all the other inhabitants of America, there is ſuch a ſtriking ſimilitude in the form of their bodies, and the qualities of their minds, that, notwithſtanding the diverſities occaſioned by the influence of climate, or unequal progreſs in improvement, we muſt pronounce them to be deſcended from one ſource. There may be a variety in the ſhades, but we can every where trace the ſame original colour. Each tribe has ſomething peculiar which diſtinguiſhes it, but in all of them we diſcern certain features common to the whole race. It is remarkable, that in every peculiarity, whether in their perſons or diſpoſitions, which characteriſe the Americans, they have ſome reſemblance to the rude tribes ſcattered over the north-eaſt of Aſia, but almoſt none to the nations ſettled in the northern extremities of Europe. We may, therefore, refer them to the former origin, and conclude that their Aſiatic progenitors, having ſettled in thoſe parts of America, where the Ruſſians have diſcovered the proximity of the two continents, ſpread gradually over its various regions. This account of the progreſs of population in America, coincides with the traditions of the Mexicans concerning their own origin, which, imperfect as they are, were preſerved with more accuracy, and merit greater credit, than thoſe of any people in the New World. According to them, their anceſtors came from a remote country, ſituated to the north-eaſt of Mexico. They point

point out their various ſtations as they advanced from this, into the interior provinces, and it is preciſely the ſame route which they muſt have held, if they had been emigrants from Aſia. The Mexicans, in deſcribing the appearance of their progenitors, their manners, and habits of life at that period, exactly delineate thoſe of the rude Tartars, from whom I ſuppoſe them to have ſprung [r].

THUS have I finiſhed a diſquiſition which has been deemed of ſo much importance, that it would have been improper to omit it in writing the hiſtory of America. I have ventured to inquire, but without preſuming to decide. Satisfied with offering conjectures, I pretend not to eſtabliſh any ſyſtem. When an inveſtigation is, from its nature, ſo intricate and obſcure, that it is impoſſible to arrive at concluſions which are certain, there may be ſome merit in pointing out ſuch as are probable [s].

Condition and character of the Americans.

THE condition and character of the American nations, at the time when they became known to the Europeans, deſerve more attentive conſideration, than the inquiry concerning their original. The latter is merely an object of curioſity, the former is one of the moſt important as well as inſtructive reſearches, which can occupy the philoſopher or hiſtorian. In order to complete the hiſtory of the human mind, and attain to a perfect knowledge of its nature and operations, we muſt contemplate man in all thoſe various ſituations wherein he has been placed. We muſt follow him in his progreſs through the different ſtages of ſociety, as he gra-

[r] Acoſta Hiſt. Nat. & Mor. lib. vii. c. 2, &c. Garcia Origen de los Indios, lib. v. c. 3. Torquemada Monar. Ind. lib. i. c. 2, &c. Boturini Benaduci Idea de una Hiſt. de la Amer. Septentr. § xvii. p. 127.

[s] Memoires ſur la Louiſiane, par Dumont, tom. i. p. 119.

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dually advances from the infant ſtate of civil life towards its maturity and decline. We muſt obſerve, at each period, how the faculties of his underſtanding unfold, we muſt attend to the efforts of his active powers, watch the motions of affection as they riſe in his breaſt, and mark whither they tend, and with what ardour they are exerted. The philoſophers and hiſtorians of ancient Greece and Rome, our guides in this as well as every other diſquiſition, had only a limited view of this ſubject, as they had hardly any opportunity of ſurveying man in his rudeſt and moſt early ſtate. In all thoſe regions of the earth with which they were acquainted, civil ſociety had made conſiderable advances, and nations had finiſhed a good part of their career before they began to obſerve them. The Scythians and Germans, the rudeſt people of whom any ancient author has tranſmitted to us an authentic account, poſſeſſed flocks and herds, had acquired property of various kinds, and, when compared with mankind in their primitive ſtate, may be reckoned to have attained to a great degree of civilization.

Leſs improved than in any part of the earth.

But the diſcovery of the New World enlarged the ſphere of contemplation, and preſented nations to our view, in ſtages of their progreſs, much leſs advanced than thoſe wherein they have been obſerved in our continent. In America, man appears under the rudeſt form in which we can conceive him to ſubſiſt. We behold communities juſt beginning to unite, and may examine the ſentiments and actions of human beings in the infancy of ſocial life, while they feel but imperfectly the force of its ties, and have ſcarcely relinquiſhed their native liberty. That ſtate of primæval ſimplicity, which was known in our continent only by the fanciful deſcription of poets, really exiſted in the other. The greater

greater part of its inhabitants were ſtrangers to induſtry and labour, ignorant of arts, and almoſt unacquainted with property, enjoying in common the bleſſings which flowed ſpontaneouſly from the bounty of nature. There were only two nations in this vaſt continent which had emerged from this rude ſtate, and had made any conſiderable progreſs in acquiring the ideas, and adopting the inſtitutions, which belong to poliſhed ſocieties. Their government and manners will fall naturally under our review in relating the diſcovery and conqueſt of the Mexican and Peruvian empires; and we ſhall have there an opportunity of contemplating the Americans in the ſtate of higheſt improvement to which they ever attained.

This inquiry confined to the rudeſt tribes.

At preſent, our attention and reſearches ſhall be turned to the ſmall independent tribes which occupied every other part of America. Among theſe, though with ſome diverſity in their character, their manners and inſtitutions, the ſtate of ſociety was nearly ſimilar, and ſo extremely rude, that the denomination of *Savage* may be applied to them all. In a general hiſtory of America, it would be highly improper to deſcribe the condition of each petty community, or to inveſtigate every minute circumſtance which contributes to form the character of its members. Such an inquiry would lead to details of immeaſurable and tireſome extent. The qualities belonging to the people of all the different tribes have ſuch a near reſemblance, that they may be painted with the ſame features. Where any circumſtances ſeem to conſtitute a diverſity in their character and manners worthy of attention, it will be ſufficient to point theſe out as they occur, and to inquire into the cauſes of ſuch peculiarities.

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Difficulty of obtaining information,

It is extremely difficult to procure ſatisfying and authentic information concerning nations while they remain uncivilized. To diſcover their true character under this rude form, and to collect the features by which they are diſtinguiſhed, requires an obſerver poſſeſſed of no leſs impartiality than diſcernment. For, in every ſtage of ſociety, the faculties, the ſentiments and deſires of men are ſo accommodated to their own ſtate, that they become ſtandards of excellence to themſelves, they affix the idea of perfection and happineſs to thoſe attainments which reſemble their own, and wherever the objects and enjoyments to which they have been accuſtomed are wanting, confidently pronounce a people barbarous and miſerable. Hence the mutual contempt with which the members of communities, unequal in their degrees of improvement, regard each other. Poliſhed nations, conſcious of the advantages which they derive from their knowledge and arts, are apt to view rude nations with peculiar ſcorn, and, in the pride of ſuperiority, will hardly allow either their occupations, their feelings, or their pleaſures, to be worthy of men. It has ſeldom been the lot of communities, in their early and unpoliſhed ſtate, to fall under the obſervation of perſons, endowed with force of mind ſuperior to vulgar prejudices, and capable of contemplating man, under whatever aſpect he appears, with a candid and diſcerning eye.

From the incapacity of the firſt obſervers,

The Spaniards, who firſt viſited America, and who had an opportunity of beholding its various tribes, while entire and unſubdued, were far from poſſeſſing the qualities requiſite for obſerving the ſtriking ſpectacle preſented to their view. Neither the age in which they lived, nor the nation to which they belonged, had made ſuch progreſs in true ſcience, as inſpires enlarged and liberal ſentiments.

The

The conquerors of the New World were moſtly illiterate adventurers, deſtitute of all the ideas which ſhould have directed them in contemplating objects, ſo extremely different from thoſe with which they were acquainted. Surrounded continually with danger, or ſtruggling with hardſhips, they had little leiſure, and leſs capacity for any ſpeculative inquiry. Eager to take poſſeſſion of a country of ſuch vaſt extent and opulence, and happy in finding it occupied by inhabitants ſo incapable to defend it, they haſtily pronounced them to be a wretched order of men, formed merely for ſervitude; and were more employed in computing the profits of their labour, than in inquiring into the operations of their minds, or the reaſons of their cuſtoms and inſtitutions. The perſons who penetrated at ſubſequent periods into the interior provinces, to which the knowledge and devaſtations of the firſt conquerors did not reach, were generally of a ſimilar character; brave and enterpriſing in an high degree, but ſo uninformed as to be little qualified either for obſerving or deſcribing what they beheld.

and their prejudices;

Not only the incapacity, but the prejudices of the Spaniards, render their accounts of the people of America extremely defective. Soon after they planted colonies in their new conqueſts, a difference in opinion aroſe with reſpect to the treatment of the natives. One party, ſolicitous to render their ſervitude perpetual, repreſented them as a brutiſh, obſtinate race, incapable either of acquiring religious knowledge, or of being trained to the functions of ſocial life. The other, full of pious concern for their converſion, contended that, though rude and ignorant, they were gentle, affectionate, docile, and by proper inſtructions and regulations might be formed gradually into good Chriſtians and uſeful citizens.

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citizens. This controverſy, as I have already related, was carried on with all the warmth which is natural, when attention to intereſt on the one hand, and religious zeal on the other, animate the diſputants. Moſt of the laity eſpouſed the former opinion; all the eccleſiaſtics were advocates for the latter; and we ſhall uniformly find that, accordingly as an author belonged to either of theſe parties, he is apt to magnify the virtues or aggravate the defects of the Americans beyond meaſure. Thoſe repugnant accounts increaſe the difficulty of attaining a perfect knowledge of their character, and render it neceſſary to peruſe all the deſcriptions of them by Spaniſh writers with diſtruſt, and to receive their information with ſome allowance.

and from the ſyſtems of philoſophers.

ALMOST two centuries elapſed after the diſcovery of America, before the manners of its inhabitants attracted, in any conſiderable degree, the attention of philoſophers. At length, they diſcovered that the knowledge of their condition and character might enable them to fill up a conſiderable chaſm in the hiſtory of the human ſpecies, and lead to ſpeculations no leſs curious than important. They entered upon this new field of ſtudy with great ardour; but, inſtead of throwing light upon the ſubject, they have contributed, in ſome degree, to involve it in additional obſcurity. Too impatient to inquire, they haſtened to decide; and began to erect ſyſtems, when they ſhould have been ſearching for facts on which to eſtabliſh their foundations. Struck with the appearance of degeneracy in the human ſpecies throughout the New World, and aſtoniſhed at beholding a vaſt continent occupied by a naked, feeble, and ignorant race of men, ſome authors of great name have maintained, that this part of the globe had but lately emerged from the

the ſea, and become fit for the reſidence of man; that every thing in it bore marks of a recent original; and that its inhabitants, lately called into exiſtence, and ſtill at the beginning of their career, were unworthy to be compared with the people of a more ancient and improved continent[t]. Others have imagined, that, under the influence of an unkindly climate, which checks and enervates the principle of life, man never attained in America the perfection which belongs to his nature, but remained an animal of an inferior order, defective in the vigour of his bodily frame, and deſtitute of ſenſibility, as well as of force, in the operations of his mind[u]. In oppoſition to both theſe, other philoſophers have ſuppoſed that man arrives at his higheſt dignity and excellence long before he reaches a ſtate of refinement; and, in the rude ſimplicity of ſavage life, diſplays an elevation of ſentiment, an independence of mind, and a warmth of attachment, for which it is vain to ſearch among the members of poliſhed ſocieties[x]. They ſeem to conſider that as the moſt perfect ſtate of man which is the leaſt civilized. They deſcribe the manners of the rude Americans with ſuch rapture, as if they propoſed them for models to the reſt of the ſpecies. Theſe contradictory theories have been propoſed with equal confidence, and uncommon powers of genius and eloquence have been exerted in order to clothe them with an appearance of truth.

As all thoſe circumſtances concur in rendering an inquiry into the ſtate of the rude nations in America intricate and obſcure, it is neceſſary to carry it on with caution. When guided in our reſearches by the intelligent obſervations of the

[t] M. de Buffon Hiſt. Nat. iii. 484, &c. ix. 103. 114.
[u] M. de P. Recherches Philoſ. ſur les Americ. paſſim.
[x] M. Rouſſeau.

few

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few philoſophers who have viſited this part of the globe, we may venture to decide. When obliged to have recourſe to the ſuperficial remarks of vulgar travellers, of ſailors, traders, buccaneers, and miſſionaries, we muſt often pauſe, and comparing detached facts, endeavour to diſcover what they wanted ſagacity to obſerve. Without indulging conjecture, or betraying a propenſity to either ſyſtem, we muſt ſtudy with equal care to avoid the extremes of extravagant admiration, or of ſupercilious contempt for thoſe manners which we deſcribe.

Method obſerved in the inquiry.

In order to conduct this inquiry with greater accuracy, it ſhould be rendered as ſimple as poſſible. Man exiſted as an individual before he became the member of a community; and the qualities which belong to him under his former capacity ſhould be known, before we proceed to examine thoſe which ariſe from the latter relation. This is peculiarly neceſſary in inveſtigating the manners of rude nations. Their political union is ſo incomplete, their civil inſtitutions and regulations ſo few, ſo ſimple, and of ſuch ſmall authority, that they ought to be viewed rather as independent agents, than as members of a regular ſociety. The character of a ſavage reſults almoſt entirely from his ſentiments or feelings as an individual, and is but little influenced by his imperfect ſubjection to government and order. I ſhall conduct my reſearches concerning the manners of the Americans in this natural order, proceeding gradually from what is ſimple to what is more complicated.

I shall conſider, I. The bodily conſtitution of the Americans in thoſe regions now under review. II. The qualities of their minds. III. Their domeſtic ſtate. IV. Their political ſtate and inſtitutions. V. Their ſyſtem of war, and public ſecurity,

ſecurity. VI. The arts with which they were acquainted. VII. Their religious ideas and inſtitutions. VIII. Such ſingular detached cuſtoms as are not reducible to any of the former heads. IX. I ſhall conclude with a general review and eſtimate of their virtues and defects.

The conſtitution of their bodies.

I. The bodily conſtitution of the Americans.—The human body is leſs affected by climate than that of any other animal. Some animals are confined to a particular region of the globe, and cannot exiſt beyond it; others, though they may be brought to bear the injuries of a climate foreign to them, ceaſe to multiply when carried out of that diſtrict, which Nature deſtined to be their manſion. Even ſuch as ſeem capable of being naturalized in various climates, feel the effect of every remove from their proper ſtation, and gradually dwindle and degenerate from the vigour and perfection peculiar to their ſpecies. Man is the only living creature whoſe frame is at once ſo hardy and ſo flexible, that he can ſpread over the whole earth, become the inhabitant of every region, and thrive and multiply under every climate. Subject, however, to the general law of Nature, the human body is not entirely exempt from the operation of climate, and when expoſed to the extremes either of heat or cold, its ſize or vigour diminiſhes.

Complexion, &c.

The firſt appearance of the inhabitants of the New World, filled the diſcoverers with ſuch aſtoniſhment, that they were apt to imagine them a race of men different from thoſe of the other hemiſphere. Their complexion is of a reddiſh brown, nearly reſembling the colour of copper [y]. The hair of their heads is always black, long, coarſe, and

[y] Oviedo Somario, p. 46, D. Life of Columbus, c. 24.

lank.

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blank. They have no beard, and every part of their body is perfectly ſmooth. Their perſons are of a full ſize, extremely ſtraight, and well proportioned [z]. Their features are regular, though often diſtorted by abſurd endeavours to improve the beauty of their natural form, or to render their aſpect more dreadful to their enemies. In the iſlands, where four-footed animals were both few and ſmall, and the earth yielded her productions almoſt ſpontaneouſly, the conſtitution of the natives, neither braced by the active exerciſes of the chace, nor invigorated by the labour of cultivation, was extremely feeble and languid. On the continent, where the foreſts abound with game of various kinds, and the chief occupation of many tribes was to purſue it, their frame acquired greater firmneſs. Still, however, the Americans were more remarkable for agility than ſtrength. They reſembled beaſts of prey, rather than animals formed for labour [a]. They were not only averſe to toil, but incapable of it; and when rouzed by force from their native indolence, and compelled to work, they ſunk under taſks which the people of the other continent would have performed with eaſe [b]. This feebleneſs of conſtitution was univerſal among the inhabitants of thoſe regions in America which we are ſurveying, and may be conſidered as characteriſtic of the ſpecies there [c].

More feeble.

THE beardleſs countenance and ſmooth ſkin of the American ſeems to indicate a defect of vigour, occaſioned by ſome vice in his frame. He is deſtitute

[z] See NOTE XVI. [a] See NOTE XVII.

[b] Oviedo Som. p. 51, C. Voy. de Correal, ii. 138. Wafer's Deſcription, p. 131.

[c] B. Las Caſas Brev. Relac. p. 4. Torquem. Monar. i. 580. Oviedo Somario, p. 41. Hiſtor. lib. iii. c. 6. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 5. Simon. p. 41.

of

of one ſign of manhood and of ſtrength. This peculiarity, by which the inhabitants of the New World are diſtinguiſhed from the people of all other nations, cannot be attributed, as ſome travellers have ſuppoſed, to their mode of ſubſiſtence[d]. For though the food of many Americans be ſo extremely inſipid, that they are altogether unacquainted with the uſe of ſalt, rude tribes in other parts of the earth have ſubſiſted on aliments equally ſimple without this mark of degradation, or any apparent ſymptom of a diminution in their vigour.

Leſs appetite.

As the external form of the Americans leads us to ſuſpect that there is ſome natural debility in their frame, the ſmallneſs of their appetite for food has been mentioned by many authors as a confirmation of this ſuſpicion. The quantity of food which men conſume varies according to the temperature of the climate in which they live, the degree of activity which they exert, and the natural vigour of their conſtitutions. Under the enervating heat of the torrid zone and when men paſs their days in indolence and eaſe, they require leſs nouriſhment than the active inhabitants of temperate or cold countries. But neither the warmth of their climate, nor their extreme lazineſs, will account for the uncommon defect of appetite among the Americans. The Spaniards were aſtoniſhed with obſerving this, not only in the iſlands, but in ſeveral parts of the continent. The conſtitutional temperance of the natives far exceeded, in their opinion, the abſtinence of the moſt mortified hermits[e]; while, on the other hand, the appetite of the Spaniards appeared to the Americans inſatiably voracious; and they affirmed, that one Spaniard

[d] Charlev. Hiſt. de Nouv. Fr. iii. 310.

[e] Ramuſio, iii. 304, F. 306, A. Simon Conquiſta, &c. p. 39. Hakluyt, iii. 468. 508.

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niard devoured more food in a day than was ſufficient for ten Americans [f].

Leſs vehemence of deſire.

A PROOF of ſome feebleneſs in their frame ſtill more ſtriking, is the inſenſibility of the Americans to the charms of beauty, and the power of love. That paſſion which was deſtined to perpetuate life, to be the bond of ſocial union, and the ſource of tenderneſs and joy, is the moſt ardent in the human breaſt; and though the perils and hardſhips of the ſavage ſtate, though exceſſive fatigue, on ſome occaſions, and the difficulty at all times of procuring ſubſiſtence, may ſeem to be adverſe to this paſſion, and to have a tendency to abate its vigour, yet the rudeſt nations in every other part of the globe ſeem to feel its influence more powerfully than the inhabitants of the New World. The negro glows with all the warmth of deſire natural to his climate; and the moſt uncultivated Aſiatics diſcover that ſenſibility, which, from their ſituation, we ſhould expect them to have felt. But the Americans are, in an amazing degree, ſtrangers to the force of this firſt inſtinct of nature. In every part of the New World the natives treat their women with coldneſs and indifference. They are neither the objects of that tender attachment which takes place in civilized ſociety, nor of that ardent deſire conſpicuous among rude nations. Even in climates where this paſſion uſually acquires its greateſt vigour, the ſavage of America views his female with diſdain, as an animal of a leſs noble ſpecies. He is at no pains to win her favour by the aſſiduity of courtſhip, and ſtill leſs ſolicitous to preſerve it by indulgence and gentleneſs [g]. Miſſio-

[f] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ii. c. 16.

[g] Hennepin Moeurs des Sauvages, 32, &c. Rochefort Hiſt. des Iſles Antilles, p. 461. Voyage de Correal, ii. 141. Ramuſio, iii. 309. F. Lozano Deſcr. del Gran Chaco, 71. Falkner's Deſcr. of Patagon. p. 125. Lettere di P. Cataneo ap. Muratori Il Chriſtian. Felice, i. 305.

naries

naries themſelves, notwithſtanding the auſterity of monaſtic ideas, cannot refrain from expreſſing their aſtoniſhment at the diſpaſſionate coldneſs of the American young men in their intercourſe with the other ſex [h]. Nor is this reſerve to be aſcribed to any opinion which they entertain with reſpect to the merit of female chaſtity. That is an idea too refined for a ſavage, and ſuggeſted by a delicacy of ſentiment and affection to which he is a ſtranger.

Reflections with reſpect to theſe.

But in inquiries concerning either the bodily or mental qualities of particular races of men, there is not a more common or more ſeducing error, than that of aſcribing to a ſingle cauſe, thoſe characteriſtic peculiarities, which are the effect of the combined operation of many cauſes. The climate and ſoil of America differ, in ſo many reſpects, from thoſe of the other hemiſphere, and this difference is ſo obvious and ſtriking, that philoſophers of great eminence have laid hold on this as ſufficient to account for what is peculiar in the conſtitution of its inhabitants. They reſt on phyſical cauſes alone, and conſider the feeble frame and languid deſire of the Americans, as conſequences of the temperament of that portion of the globe which they inhabit. But the influences of political and moral cauſes ought not to have been overlooked. Theſe operate with no leſs effect than that on which they reſt as a full explanation of the ſingular appearances which have been mentioned. Wherever the ſtate of ſociety is ſuch as to create many wants and deſires, which cannot be ſatisfied without regular exertions of induſtry, the body accuſtomed to labour becomes robuſt

[h] Chanvalon. p. 51. Lettr. Edif. tom. xxiv. 318. Tertre, ii. 377. Venegaſ. i. 81. Ribas Hiſt. de los Triumf. p. 11.

and

BOOK IV. and patient of fatigue. In a more ſimple ſtate, where the demands of men are ſo few and ſo moderate, that they may be gratified, almoſt without any effort, by the ſpontaneous productions of nature, the powers of the body are not called forth, nor can they attain their proper ſtrength. The natives of Chili and of North-America, the two temperate regions in the New World, who live by hunting, may be deemed an active and vigorous race, when compared with the inhabitants of the iſles, or of thoſe parts of the continent where hardly any labour is requiſite to procure ſubſiſtence. The exertions of a hunter are not, however, ſo regular, or ſo continued, as thoſe of perſons employed in the culture of the earth, or in the various arts of civilized life, and though his agility may be greater than theirs, his ſtrength is on the whole inferior. If another direction were given to the active powers of man in the New World, and his force augmented by exerciſe, he might acquire a degree of vigour which he does not in his preſent ſtate poſſeſs. The truth of this is confirmed by experience. Wherever the Americans have been gradually accuſtomed to hard labour, their conſtitutions become robuſt, and they have been found capable of performing ſuch taſks, as ſeemed not only to exceed the powers of ſuch a feeble frame as has been deemed peculiar to their country, but to equal any effort of the natives, either of Africa or of Europe [i].

THE ſame reaſoning will apply to what has been obſerved concerning their ſlender demand for food. As a proof that this ſhould be aſcribed, as much to their extreme indolence, and often total want of occupation, as to any thing peculiar in the

[i] See NOTE XVIII.

phyſical

phyſical ſtructure of their bodies, it has been obſerved, that in thoſe diſtricts, where the people of America are obliged to exert any unuſual effort of activity, in order to procure ſubſiſtence, or wherever they are employed in ſevere labour, their appetite is not inferior to that of other men, and, in ſome places, it has ſtruck obſervers as remarkably voracious [k].

The operation of political and moral cauſes is ſtill more conſpicuous, in modifying the degree of attachment between the ſexes. In a ſtate of high civilization, this paſſion, inflamed by reſtraint, refined by delicacy, and cheriſhed by faſhion, occupies and engroſſes the heart. It is no longer a ſimple inſtinct of nature; ſentiment heightens the ardour of deſire, and the moſt tender emotions of which our frame is ſuſceptible, ſoothe and agitate the ſoul. This deſcription, however, applies only to thoſe, who, by their ſituation, are exempted from the cares and labours of life. Among perſons of inferior order, who are doomed by their condition to inceſſant toil, the dominion of this paſſion is leſs violent, and their ſolicitude to procure ſubſiſtence, and to provide for the firſt demand of nature, leaves little leiſure for attending to its ſecond call. But if the nature of the intercourſe between the ſexes varies ſo much in perſons of different rank in poliſhed ſocieties, the condition of man, while he remains uncivilized, muſt occaſion a variation ſtill more apparent. We may well ſuppoſe, that amidſt the hardſhips, the dangers, and the ſimplicity of ſavage life, where ſubſiſtence is always precarious, and often ſcanty, where men are almoſt continually engaged in the purſuit of their enemies, or in guarding againſt their attacks, and where neither

[k] Gumilla, ii. 12. 70. 237. Lafitau, i. 515. Ovalle Church. iii. 81. Muratori, i. 295.

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dreſs nor reſerve are employed as arts of female allurement, that the attention of the Americans to their women would be extremely feeble, without imputing this ſolely to any phyſical defect or degradation in their frame.

It is accordingly obſerved, that in thoſe countries of America, where, from the fertility of the ſoil, the mildneſs of the climate, or ſome farther advances which the natives have made in improvement, the means of ſubſiſtence are more abundant, and the hardſhips of ſavage life are leſs ſeverely felt, the animal paſſion of the ſexes becomes more ardent. Striking examples of this occur among ſome tribes ſeated on the banks of great rivers well ſtored with food, among others who are maſters of hunting-grounds abounding ſo much with game, that they have a regular and plentiful ſupply of nouriſhment with little labour. The ſuperior degree of ſecurity and affluence which they enjoy, is followed by their natural effects. The paſſions implanted in the human frame by the hand of nature acquire additional force; new taſtes and deſires are formed; the women, as they are more valued and admired, become more attentive to dreſs and ornament; the men, beginning to feel how much of their own happineſs depends upon them, no longer diſdain the arts of winning their favour and affection. The intercourſe of the ſexes becomes very different from that which takes place among their ruder countrymen; and as hardly any reſtraint is impoſed on the gratification of deſire, either by religion, or laws, or decency, the diſſolution of their manners is exceſſive [1].

None of them deformed.

Notwithstanding the feeble make of the Americans, almoſt none of them are deformed, or

[1] Biet. 389. Charlev. iii. 423. Dumont mem. ſur Louiſiane, i. 155.

mutilated,

mutilated, or defective in any of their ſenſes. All travellers have been ſtruck with this circumſtance, and have celebrated the uniform ſymmetry and perfection of their external figure. Some authors ſearch for the cauſe of this appearance in their phyſical condition. As the parents are not exhauſted or over-fatigued with hard labour, they ſuppoſe that their children are born vigorous and ſound. They imagine, that in the liberty of ſavage life, the human body, naked and unconfined from its earlieſt age, preſerves its natural form; and that all its limbs and members acquire a juſter proportion, than when fettered with artificial reſtraints, which ſtint its growth, and diſtort its ſhape [m]. Something, without doubt, may be aſcribed to the operation of theſe cauſes; but the true reaſons of this apparent advantage, which is common to all ſavage nations, lie deeper, and are cloſely interwoven with the nature and genius of that ſtate. The infancy of man is ſo long and ſo helpleſs, that it is extremely difficult to rear children among rude nations. Their means of ſubſiſtence are not only ſcanty, but precarious. Such as live by hunting muſt range over extenſive countries, and ſhift often from place to place. The care of children, as well as every other laborious taſk, is devolved upon the women. The diſtreſſes and hardſhips of the ſavage life, which are often ſuch as can hardly be ſupported by perſons in full vigour, muſt be fatal to thoſe of more tender age. Afraid of undertaking a taſk ſo laborious, and of ſuch long duration, the women, in ſome parts of America, extinguiſh the firſt ſparks of that life which they are unable to cheriſh, and by the uſe of certain herbs procure frequent abortions [n]. Senſible that only ſtout and

[m] Piſo, p. 6.

[n] Ellis's Voyage to Hudſon's Bay, 198. Herrera, dec. 7. lib. ix. c. 4.

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well-formed children have force of conſtitution to ſtruggle through ſuch an hard infancy, other nations abandon or deſtroy ſuch of their progeny as appear feeble or defective, as unworthy of attention [o]. Even when they endeavour to rear all their children without diſtinction, ſo great a proportion of the whole number periſhes under the rigorous treatment which muſt be their lot in the ſavage ſtate, that few of thoſe who laboured under any original frailty attain the age of manhood [p]. Thus, in poliſhed ſocieties, where the means of ſubſiſtence are ſecured with certainty, and acquired with eaſe; where the talents of the mind are often of more importance than the powers of the body; children are preſerved notwithſtanding their defects or deformity, and grow up to be uſeful citizens. In rude nations, ſuch perſons are either cut off as ſoon as they are born, or becoming a burden to themſelves and to the community, cannot long protract their lives. But in thoſe provinces of the New World where, by the eſtabliſhment of the Europeans, more regular proviſion has been made for the ſubſiſtence of its inhabitants, and they are reſtrained from laying violent hands on their children, the Americans are ſo far from being eminent for any ſuperior perfection in their form, that one ſhould rather ſuſpect ſome peculiar imbecillity in the race, from the extraordinary number of individuals who are deformed, dwarfiſh, mutilated, blind, or deaf [q].

Uniformity of their appearance.

HOWEVER feeble the conſtitution of the Americans may be, it is remarkable, that there is leſs variety in the human form throughout the New World, than in the ancient continent. When Columbus and

[o] Gumilla Hiſt. ii. 234. Techo's Hiſt. of Paraguay, &c. Churchill's Collect. vi. 108.

[p] Creuxii Hiſt. Canad. p. 57.

[q] Voyage de Ulloa, i. 232.

the

the other diſcoverers firſt viſited the different countries of America which lie within the torrid zone, they naturally expected to find people of the ſame complexion with thoſe in the correſponding regions of the other hemiſphere. To their amazement, however, they diſcovered that America contained no negroes [r]; and the cauſe of this ſingular appearance became as much the object of curioſity, as the fact itſelf was of wonder. In what part or membrane of the body that humour reſides which tinges the complexion of the negro with a deep black, it is the buſineſs of anatomiſts to inquire and deſcribe. The powerful operation of heat appears manifeſtly to be the cauſe which produces this ſtriking variety in the human ſpecies. All Europe, almoſt the whole of Aſia, and the temperate parts of Africa, are occupied by men of a fair complexion. All the torrid zone in Africa, ſome of the warmer regions adjacent to it, and a few countries in Aſia, are filled with people of a deep black colour. If we trace the nations of our continent, making our progreſs from cold and temperate countries towards thoſe parts which are expoſed to the influence of vehement and unremitting heat, we ſhall find, that the extreme whiteneſs of their ſkin ſoon begins to diminiſh; that its colour deepens gradually as we advance; and after paſſing through all the ſucceſſive gradations of ſhade, terminates in an uniform unvarying black. But in America, where the agency of heat is checked and abated by various cauſes, which I have already explained, the climate ſeems to be deſtitute of that force which produces ſuch wonderful effects on the human frame. The colour of the natives of the torrid zone, in America, can hardly be ſaid to be of a deeper hue than that of the people in the more temperate parts of their continent. Accurate

[r] P. Martyr, dec. p. 71.

obſervers,

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observers, who had an opportunity of viewing the Americans in very different climates, and in countries far removed from each other, have been ſtruck with the amazing ſimilarity of their figure and aſpect [s].

But though the hand of Nature has deviated ſo little from one ſtandard in faſhioning the human form in America, the creation of fancy hath been various and extravagant. The ſame fables that were current in the ancient continent, have been revived with reſpect to the New World, and America too has been peopled with human beings of monſtrous and fantaſtic appearance. The inhabitants of certain provinces were deſcribed to be pigmies of three feet high; thoſe of others to be giants of an enormous ſize. Some travellers publiſhed accounts of people with only one eye, others pretended to have diſcovered men without heads, whoſe eyes and mouths were planted in their breaſts. The variety of Nature in her productions is, indeed, ſo great, that it is preſumptuous to ſet bounds to her fertility, and to reject indiſcriminately every relation that is not perfectly conſonant to our own limited obſervation and experience. But the other extreme, of yielding an haſty aſſent, on the ſlighteſt evidence, to whatever has the appearance of being ſtrange and marvellous, is no leſs unbecoming a philoſophical inquirer, as, in every period, men are more apt to be betrayed into error, by their weakneſs in believing too much, than by their arrogance in believing too little. In proportion as ſcience extends, and nature is examined with a diſcerning eye, the wonders that amuſed ages of ignorance diſappear. The tales of credulous travellers concerning America are forgotten; the monſters which they deſcribe have been ſearched for in vain; and

[s] See NOTE XIX.

thoſe

thoſe provinces where they pretend to have found inhabitants of ſingular forms, are now known to be poſſeſſed by people no wiſe different from the other Americans [t].

THOUGH theſe relations may, without diſcuſſion, be rejected as fabulous, there are other accounts of ſuch varieties in the human ſpecies in ſome parts of the New World, which reſt upon better evidence, and merit more attentive examination. This variety has been particularly obſerved in three different diſtricts. The firſt of theſe is ſituated in the iſthmus of Darien, near the centre of America. Lionel Wafer, a traveller poſſeſſed of more curioſity and intelligence than we ſhould have expected to find in an aſſociate of Buccaneers, diſcovered there a ſmall, but ſingular race of men. They are of low ſtature, according to his deſcription, of a feeble make, incapable of enduring fatigue. Their colour is a dead milk white; not reſembling that of fair people among Europeans, but without any tincture of a bluſh or ſanguine complexion. Their ſkin is covered with a fine hairy down of a chalky white, the hair of their heads, their eye-brows, and eye-laſhes, are of the ſame hue. Their eyes are of a ſingular form, and ſo weak, that they can hardly bear the light of the ſun; but they ſee clearly by moon-light, and are moſt active and gay in the night [u]. No race ſimilar to this has been diſcovered in any other part of America. Cortes, indeed, found ſome perſons exactly reſembling the white people of Darien, among the rare and monſtrous animals which Montezuma had collected [w]. But as the power of the Mexican empire extended to the provinces bordering on the iſthmus of Darien, they

[t] See NOTE XX.

[u] Wafer Deſcript. of Iſth. ap. Dampier, iii. p. 346.

[w] Cortes ap. Ramuſ. iii. p. 241, E.

were

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were probably brought from thence. Singular as the appearance of thoſe people may be, they cannot be conſidered as conſtituting a diſtinct ſpecies. Among the negroes of Africa, as well as the natives of the Indian iſlands, nature ſometimes produces a ſmall number of individuals, with all the characteriſtic features and qualities of the white people of Darien. The former are called *Albinos* by the Portugueſe, the latter *Kackerlakes* by the Dutch. In Darien the parents of thoſe *Whites* are of the ſame colour with the other natives of the country; and this obſervation applies equally to the anomalous progeny of the negroes and Indians. The ſame mother who produces ſome children of a colour that does not belong to the race, brings forth the reſt of the complexion peculiar to her country [x]. One concluſion may then be formed with reſpect to the people deſcribed by Wafer, the *Albinos* and the *Kackerlakes*; they are a degenerated breed, not a ſeparate claſs of men; and from ſome diſeaſe or defect of their parents, the peculiar colour and debility which mark their degradation is tranſmitted to them. As a deciſive proof of this, it has been obſerved, that neither the white people of Darien, nor the Albinos of Africa, propagate their race: their children are of the colour and temperament peculiar to the natives of their reſpective countries [y].

The ſecond diſtrict that is occupied by inhabitants differing in appearance from the other people of America, is ſituated in a high northern latitude, extending from the coaſt of Labrador towards the pole, as far as the country is habitable. The people ſcattered over thoſe dreary regions, are known to the Europeans by the name of *Eſquimaux*. They

[x] Margrav. Hiſt. Rer. Nat. Braſ. lib. viii. c. 4.

[y] Wafer, p. 348. Demanet. Hiſt. de l'Afrique, ii. 234. Recherch. Philoſ. ſur les Amer. ii. 1, &c.

themſelves,

themſelves, with that idea of their own ſuperiority, which conſoles the rudeſt and moſt wretched nations, aſſume the name of *Keralit* or *Men*. They are of a middle ſize and robuſt, with heads of a diſproportioned bulk, and feet as remarkably ſmall. Their complexion, though ſwarthy, by being continually expoſed to the rigour of a cold climate, inclines to the European white, rather than to the copper colour of America, and the men have beards which are ſometimes buſhy and long [z]. From theſe marks of diſtinction, as well as from one ſtill leſs equivocal, the affinity of their language to that of the Greenlanders, which I have already mentioned, we may conclude, with ſome degree of confidence, that the Eſquimaux are a race different from the reſt of the Americans.

We cannot decide with equal certainty concerning the inhabitants of the third diſtrict, ſituated at the ſouthern extremity of America. Theſe are the famous *Patagonians*, who, during two centuries and a half, have afforded a ſubject of controverſy to the learned, and an object of wonder to the vulgar. They are ſuppoſed to be one of the wandering tribes, which occupy that vaſt, but leaſt known region of America, which extends from the river De la Plata to the Straits of Magellan. Their proper ſtation is in that part of the interior country, which lies on the banks of the river Negro; but in the hunting ſeaſon they often roam as far as the ſtraits which ſeparate Terra del Fuego from the main-land. The firſt accounts of this people were brought to Europe by the companions of Magellan [a], who deſcribed them as a gigantic race, above eight feet

[z] Ellis Voy. to Hudſ. Bay, p. 131. 139. De la Potherie, tom. i. p. 79. Wales' Jour. of a Voy. to Churchill River. Phil. Tranſ. vol. lx. 109.

[a] Falkner's Deſcription of Patagonia, p. 102.

high,

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high, and of ſtrength in proportion to their enormous ſize. Among ſeveral tribes of animals, a diſparity in bulk, as conſiderable, may be obſerved. Some large breeds of horſes and dogs exceed the more diminutive races in ſtature and ſtrength, as far as the Patagonian is ſuppoſed to riſe above the uſual ſtandard of the human body. But animals attain the higheſt perfection of their ſpecies, only in mild climates, or where they find the moſt nutritive food in greateſt abundance. It is not then in the uncultivated waſte of the Magellanic regions, and among a tribe of unprovident ſavages, that we ſhould expect to find man, poſſeſſing the higheſt honours of his race, and diſtinguiſhed by a ſuperiority of ſize and vigour, far beyond what he has reached in any other part of the earth. The moſt explicit and unexceptionable evidence is requiſite, in order to eſtabliſh a fact, repugnant to thoſe general principles and laws, which ſeem to affect the human frame in every other inſtance, and to decide with reſpect to its nature and qualities. Such evidence has not hitherto been produced. Though ſeveral perſons, to whoſe teſtimony great reſpect is due, have viſited this part of America ſince the time of Magellan, and have had interviews with the natives; though ſome have affirmed, that ſuch as they ſaw were of gigantic ſtature, and others have formed the ſame concluſion from meaſuring their footſteps, or the ſkeletons of their dead; yet their accounts vary from each other in ſo many eſſential points, and are mingled with ſo many circumſtances manifeſtly falſe or fabulous, as detract much from their credit. [b] On the other hand, ſome navigators, and thoſe among the moſt eminent of their order for diſcernment and accuracy, have aſſerted that the natives of Patagonia,

[b] See NOTE XXI.

with

with whom they had intercourſe, though ſtout and well made, are not of ſuch extraordinary ſize as to be diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of the human ſpecies. The exiſtence of this gigantic race of men, ſeems, then, to be one of thoſe points in natural hiſtory, with reſpect to which a cautious inquirer will heſitate, and will chuſe to ſuſpend his aſſent until more complete evidence ſhall decide, whether he ought to admit a fact, ſeemingly inconſiſtent with what reaſon and experience have diſcovered concerning the ſtructure and condition of man, in all the various ſituations in which he has been obſerved.

Their ſtate of health.

In order to form a complete idea with reſpect to the conſtitution of the inhabitants of this and the other hemiſphere, we ſhould attend not only to the make and vigour of their bodies, but conſider what degree of health they enjoy, and to what period of longevity they uſually arrive. In the ſimplicity of the ſavage ſtate, when man is not oppreſſed with labour, or enervated by luxury, or diſquieted with care, we are apt to imagine that his life will flow on almoſt untroubled by diſeaſe or ſuffering, until his days be terminated, in extreme old age, by the gradual decays of nature. We find, accordingly, among the Americans, as well as among other rude people, perſons, whoſe decrepid and ſhrivelled form ſeems to indicate an extraordinary length of life. But as moſt of them are unacquainted with the art of numbering, and all of them as forgetful of what is paſt, as they are improvident for what is to come, it is impoſſible to aſcertain their age with any degree of preciſion [b]. It is evident, that the period of their longevity muſt vary conſiderably, according to the di-

[b] Ulloa Notic. Americ. 323. Bancroft Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, 334.

verſity

BOOK IV. verſity of climates, and their different modes of ſubſiſtence. They ſeem, however, to be every where exempt from many of the diſtempers which afflict poliſhed nations. None of the maladies, which are the immediate offſpring of luxury, or ſloth, ever viſited them; and they have no names in their languages by which to diſtinguiſh this numerous train of adventitious evils.

Diſeaſes. But, whatever be the ſituation in which man is placed, he is born to ſuffer; and his diſeaſes, in the ſavage ſtate, though fewer in number, are, like thoſe of the animals whom he nearly reſembles in his mode of life, more violent, and more fatal. If luxury engenders and nouriſhes diſtempers of one ſpecies, the rigour and diſtreſſes of ſavage life bring on thoſe of another. As men, in this ſtate, are wonderfully improvident, and their means of ſubſiſtence precarious, they often paſs from extreme want to exuberant plenty, according to the viciſſitudes of fortune in the chace, or to the variety in the productions of the ſeaſons. Their inconſiderate gluttony in the one ſituation, and their ſevere abſtinence in the other, are equally pernicious. For, though the human conſtitution may be accuſtomed by habit, like that of animals of prey, to tolerate long famine, and then to gorge voraciouſly, it is not a little affected by ſuch ſudden and violent tranſitions. The ſtrength and vigour of ſavages are, at ſome ſeaſons, impaired by what they ſuffer from ſcarcity of food; at others, they are afflicted with diſorders ariſing from indigeſtion and a ſuperfluity of groſs aliment. Theſe laſt are ſo common, that they may be conſidered as the unavoidable conſequence of their mode of ſubſiſting, and cut off conſiderable numbers in the prime of life. They are likewiſe extremely ſubject

ject to conſumptions, to pleuretic, aſthmatic, and paralytic diſorders [c], brought on by the immoderate hardſhips and fatigue which they endure in hunting and in war; or owing to the inclemency of the ſeaſons to which they are continually expoſed. In the ſavage ſtate, hardſhips and fatigue violently aſſault the conſtitution. In poliſhed ſocieties, intemperance undermines it. It is not eaſy to determine which of them operates with moſt fatal effect, or tends moſt to abridge human life. The influence of the former is certainly moſt extenſive. The pernicious conſequences of luxury reach only a few members in any community, the diſtreſſes of ſavage life are felt by all. As far as I can judge, after very minute inquiry, the general period of human life is ſhorter among ſavages, than in well-regulated and induſtrious ſocieties.

One dreadful malady, the ſevereſt ſcourge, with which, in this life, offended Heaven chaſtens the indulgence of criminal deſire, ſeems to have been peculiar to the Americans. By communicating it to their conquerors, they have not only amply avenged their own wrongs, but by adding this calamity to thoſe which formerly embittered human life, they have, perhaps, more than counterbalanced all the benefits which Europe has derived from the diſcovery of the New World. This diſtemper, from the country in which it firſt raged, or from the people by whom it was ſuppoſed to have been ſpread over Europe, has been ſometimes called the Neapolitan, and ſometimes the French diſeaſe. At its firſt appearance, the in-

[c] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 364. Lafitau, ii. 360. De la Potherie, ii. 37.

fection

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fection was ſo malignant, its ſymptoms ſo violent, its operation ſo rapid and fatal, as to baffle all the efforts of medical ſkill. Aſtoniſhment and terror accompanied this unknown affliction in its progreſs, and men began to dread the extinction of the human race by ſuch a cruel viſitation. Experience, and the ingenuity of phyſicians gradually diſcovered remedies of ſuch virtue as to cure or mitigate the evil. During the courſe of two centuries and a half, its virulence ſeems to have abated conſiderably. At length in the ſame manner with the leproſy, which raged in Europe for ſome centuries, it may waſte its force and diſappear: and in ſome happier age, this weſtern infection, like that from the Eaſt, may be known only by deſcription [c].

Power and and qualities of their minds.

II. AFTER conſidering what appears to be peculiar in the bodily conſtitution of the Americans, our attention is naturally turned towards the powers and qualities of their minds. As the individual advances from the ignorance and imbecillity of the infant ſtate, to vigour and maturity of underſtanding, ſomething ſimilar to this may be obſerved in the progreſs of the ſpecies. With reſpect to it, too, there is a period of infancy, during which ſeveral powers of the mind are not unfolded, and all are feeble and defective in their operation. In the early ages of ſociety, while the condition of man is ſimple and rude, his reaſon is but little exerciſed, and his deſires move, within a very narrow ſphere. Hence ariſe two remarkable characteriſtics of the human mind, in this ſtate. Its intellectual powers are extremely limited: its emotions and efforts are few and lan-

[c] See NOTE XXII.

guid,

guid. Both theſe diſtinctions are conſpicuous among the rudeſt and moſt unimproved of the American tribes, and conſtitute a ſtriking part in their deſcription.

Intellectual faculties very limited.

WHAT, among poliſhed nations, is called ſpeculative reaſoning or reſearch, is altogether unknown in the rude ſtate of ſociety, and never becomes the occupation or amuſement of the human faculties, until man be ſo far improved as to have ſecured, with certainty, the means of ſubſiſtence, as well as the poſſeſſion of leiſure and tranquillity. The thoughts and attention of a ſavage are confined within the ſmall circle of objects, immediately conducive to his preſervation or enjoyment. Every thing beyond that, eſcapes his obſervation, or is perfectly indifferent to him. Like a mere animal, what is before his eyes intereſts and affects him; what is out of ſight, or at a diſtance, makes no impreſſion [r]. There are ſeveral people in America whoſe limited underſtandings ſeem not to be capable of forming an arrangement for futurity; neither their ſolicitude nor their foreſight extend ſo far. They follow blindly the impulſe of the appetite which they feel, but are entirely regardleſs of diſtant conſequences, and even of thoſe removed in the leaſt degree from immediate apprehenſion. While they highly prize ſuch things as ſerve preſent uſe, or miniſter to preſent enjoyment, they ſet no value upon thoſe which are not the object of ſome immediate want [s]. When, on the approach of the evening, a Caribbee feels himſelf diſpoſed to go to reſt, no conſideration will tempt him to ſell his hammoc. But, in the morning, when he is ſallying out to the buſineſs or paſtime of the day, he will part with it

[r] Ulloa Noticias Americ. 222.

[s] Venegas Hiſt. of Calif. i. 66. Sepp. Church Coll. v. 693. Borde Deſcr. des Caraibes, p. 16. Ellis Voy. 194.

for

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for the ſlighteſt toy that catches his fancy [t]. At the cloſe of winter, while the impreſſion of what he has ſuffered from the rigour of the climate is freſh in the mind of the North American, he ſets himſelf with vigour to prepare materials for erecting a comfortable hut to protect him againſt the inclemency of the ſucceeding ſeaſon; but as ſoon as the weather becomes mild, he forgets what is paſt, abandons his work, and never thinks of it more, until the return of cold compels him, when too late, to reſume it [u].

If in concerns the moſt intereſting, and ſeemingly the moſt ſimple, the reaſon of man, while rude and deſtitute of culture, differs ſo little from the thoughtleſs levity of children, or the improvident inſtinct of animals, its exertions in other directions cannot be very conſiderable. The objects towards which reaſon turns, and the diſquiſitions in which it engages, muſt depend upon the ſtate in which man is placed, and are ſuggeſted by his neceſſities and deſires. Diſquiſitions, which appear the moſt neceſſary and important to men in one ſtate of ſociety, never occur to thoſe in another. Among civilized nations, arithmetic, or the art of numbering, is deemed an eſſential and elementary ſcience, and in our continent, the invention and uſe of it reaches back to a period ſo remote as is beyond the knowledge of hiſtory. But among ſavages, who have no property to eſtimate, no hoarded treaſures to count, no variety of objects or multiplicity of ideas to enumerate, arithmetic is a ſuperfluous and uſeleſs art. Accordingly, among ſome tribes in America it ſeems to be quite unknown. There are many who cannot reckon farther than three; and have no denomination to diſtinguiſh any number above it [x]. Several

[t] Labat Voyages, ii. 114, 115. Tertre, ii. 385.

[u] Adair Hiſt. of Amer. Indians, 417.

[x] Condam, p. 67. Stadius ap. de Bry, ix. 128. Lery. ibid. 251. Biet. 362. Lettr. Edif. 23. 314.

can

can proceed as far as ten, others to twenty. When they would convey an idea of any number beyond theſe, they point to the hair of their head, intimating that it is equal to them, or with wonder declare it to be ſo great that it cannot be reckoned [y]. Not only the Americans, but all nations, while extremely rude, ſeem to be unacquainted with the art of computation [z]. As ſoon, however, as they acquire ſuch acquaintance or connection with a variety of objects, that there is frequent occaſion to combine or divide them, their knowledge of numbers increaſes, ſo that the ſtate of this art among any people may be conſidered as one ſtandard, by which to eſtimate the degree of their improvement. The Iroquois, in North America, as they are much more civilized than the rude inhabitants of Braſil, Paraguay, or Guiana, have likewiſe made greater advances in this reſpect; though even their arithmetic does not extend beyond a thouſand, as in their petty tranſactions they have no occaſion for any higher number [a]. The Cherokee, a leſs conſiderable nation on the ſame continent, can reckon only as far as a hundred, and to that extent have names for the ſeveral numbers; the ſmaller tribes in their neighbourhood can riſe no higher than ten [b].

No abſtract ideas.

In other reſpects, the exerciſe of the underſtanding among rude nations is ſtill more limited. The firſt ideas of every human being muſt be ſuch as he receives by the ſenſes. But, in the mind of man, while in the ſavage ſtate, there ſeem to be hardly

[y] Dumont Louiſ. i. 187. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 3. Biet. 396. Borde 6.

[z] This is the caſe with the Greenlanders, Crantz. i. 225. and with Kamchatkadales, M. l'Abbé Chappé, iii. 17.

[a] Charlev. Nouv. France, iii. 402.

[b] Adair Hiſt. of Amer. Indians, 77. See NOTE XXIII.

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any ideas but what enter by this avenue. The objects around him are preſented to his eye. Such as may be ſubſervient to his uſe, or can gratify any of his appetites, attract his notice; he views the reſt without curioſity or attention. Satisfied with conſidering them under that ſimple mode, in which they appear to him, as ſeparate and detached, he neither combines them ſo as to form general claſſes, nor contemplates their qualities apart, nor beſtows a thought upon the operations of his own mind concerning them. Thus, he is unacquainted with all the ideas which have been denominated *univerſal*, or *abſtract*, or *of reflection*. The range of his underſtanding muſt, of courſe, be very confined, and his reaſoning powers be employed merely on what is ſenſible. This is ſo remarkably the caſe with the ruder nations of America, that their languages, (as we ſhall afterwards find) have not a word to expreſs any thing but what is material or corporeal. *Time*, *ſpace*, *ſubſtance*, and a thouſand other terms which repreſent abſtract and univerſal ideas, are altogether unknown to them [c]. A naked ſavage, cowering near the fire in his miſerable cabbin, or ſtretched under a few branches which afford him a temporary ſhelter, has as little inclination as capacity for uſeleſs ſpeculation. His thoughts extend not beyond what relates to animal life; and when they are not directed towards ſome of its concerns, his mind is totally inactive. In ſituations where no extraordinary effort, either of ingenuity or labour is requiſite, in order to ſatisfy the ſimple demands of nature, the powers of the mind are ſo ſeldom rouſed to any exertion, that the rational faculties continue almoſt dormant and unexerciſed. The numerous tribes ſcattered over the rich plains of South America, the inhabitants of ſome of the iſlands, and of ſeveral

[c] Condam, p. 54.

fertile

fertile plains on the continent, come under this deſcription. Their vacant countenance, their ſtaring unexpreſſive eye, their lifeleſs inattention, and total ignorance of ſubjects, which ſeem to be the firſt which ſhould occupy the thoughts of rational beings, made ſuch impreſſion upon the Spaniards, when they firſt beheld thoſe rude people, that they conſidered them as animals of an inferior order, and could not believe that they belonged to the human ſpecies [d]. It required the authority of a papal bull to counteract this opinion, and to convince them that the Americans were capable of the functions, and intitled to the privileges, of humanity [e]. Since that time, perſons more enlightened and impartial than the diſcoverers or conquerors of America, have had an opportunity of contemplating the moſt ſavage of its inhabitants, and they have been aſtoniſhed and humbled, with obſerving how nearly man, in this condition, approaches to the brute creation. But in ſeverer climates, where ſubſiſtence cannot be procured with the ſame eaſe, where men muſt unite more cloſely, and act with greater concert, neceſſity calls forth their talents, and ſharpens their invention, ſo that the intelligent powers are more exerciſed and improved. The North-Americans and natives of Chili, who inhabit the temperate regions in the two great diſtricts of America, are people of cultivated and enlarged underſtandings, when viewed in compariſon with ſome of thoſe ſeated in the iſlands, or on the banks of the Maragnon and Orinoco. Their occupations are more various, their ſyſtem of policy, as well as of war, more complex, their arts more numerous. But, even among them, the intellectual powers are extremely limited in their

[d] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 15.
[e] Torquem. Mon. Ind. iii. 198.

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operations, and unleſs when turned directly to thoſe objects which intereſt a ſavage, are held in no eſtimation. Both the North-Americans and Chileſe, when not engaged in ſome of the functions belonging to a warrior or hunter, loiter away their time in thoughtleſs indolence, unacquainted with any other ſubject worthy of their attention, or capable of occupying their minds[f]. If even among them, reaſon is ſo much circumſcribed in its exertions, and never arrives, in its higheſt attainments, at the knowledge of thoſe general principles and maxims, which ſerve as the foundation of ſcience, we may conclude, that the intellectual powers of man in the ſavage ſtate are deſtitute of their proper object, and cannot acquire any conſiderable degree of vigour and enlargement.

Active efforts of the mind few and languid.

FROM the ſame cauſes, the active efforts of the mind are few, and, on moſt occaſions, languid. If we examine into the motives which rouze men to activity in civilized life, and prompt them to perſevere in fatiguing exertions of their ingenuity or ſtrength, we ſhall find that they ariſe chiefly from acquired wants and appetites. Theſe are numerous and importunate, they keep the mind in perpetual agitation, and, in order to gratify them, invention muſt be always on the ſtretch, and induſtry muſt be inceſſantly employed. But the deſires of ſimple nature are few, and where a favourable climate yields almoſt ſpontaneouſly what ſuffices them, they ſcarcely ſtir the ſoul, or excite any violent emotion. Hence the people of ſeveral tribes in America waſte their life in a liſtleſs indolence. To be

[f] Lafitau, ii. 2.

free

free from occupation, ſeems to be all the enjoyment towards which they aſpire. They will continue whole days ſtretched out in their hammocs, or ſeated on the earth, in perfect idleneſs, without changing their poſture, or raiſing their eyes from the ground, or uttering a ſingle word [g].

Improvident.

SUCH is their averſion to labour, that neither the hope of future good, nor the apprehenſion of future evil, can ſurmount it. They appear equally indifferent to both, diſcovering little ſolicitude, and taking no precautions to avoid the one, or to ſecure the other. The cravings of hunger may rouſe them; but as they devour, with little diſtinction, whatever will appeaſe its inſtinctive demands, the exertions which theſe occaſion are of ſhort duration. Deſtitute of ardour, as well as variety of deſire, they feel not the force of thoſe powerful ſprings which give vigour to the movements of the mind, and urge the patient hand of induſtry to perſevere in its efforts. Man, in ſome parts of America, appears in a form ſo rude, that we can diſcover no effects of his activity, and the principle of underſtanding which ſhould direct it, ſeems hardly to be unfolded. Like the other animals, he has no fixed reſidence; he has erected no habitation to ſhelter him from the inclemency of the weather; he has taken no meaſures for ſecuring a certain ſubſiſtence; he neither ſows nor reaps; but roams about as led in ſearch of the plants and fruits which the earth brings forth in ſucceſſion; and in queſt of the game which he kills in the foreſts, or of the fiſh which he catches in the rivers.

Some variety with reſpect to all theſe.

THIS deſcription, however, applies only to ſome tribes. Man cannot continue long in this ſtate of feeble and uninformed infancy. He was made for

[g] Bouguer Voy. au Perou, 102. Borde, 15.

induſtry

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induſtry and action, and the powers of his nature, as well as the neceſſity of his condition, urge him to fulfil his deſtiny. Accordingly, among moſt of the American nations, eſpecially thoſe ſeated in rigorous climates, ſome efforts are employed, and ſome previous precautions are taken, for ſecuring ſubſiſtence. The career of regular induſtry is begun, and the laborious arm has made the firſt eſſays of its power. Still, however, the improvident and ſlothful genius of the ſavage ſtate predominates. Even among thoſe more improved tribes, labour is deemed ignominious and degrading. It is only to work of a certain kind that a man will deign to put his hand. The greater part is devolved entirely upon the women. One half of the community remains inactive, while the other is oppreſſed with the multitude and variety of its occupations. Thus their induſtry is partial, and the foreſight which regulates it, is no leſs limited. A remarkable inſtance of this occurs in the chief arrangement with reſpect to their manner of living. They depend for their ſubſiſtence, during one part of the year, on fiſhing; during another, on hunting; during a third, on the produce of their agriculture. Though experience has taught them to foreſee the return of thoſe various ſeaſons, and to make ſome proviſion for their reſpective exigencies, they either want ſagacity to proportion this proviſion to their conſumption, or are ſo incapable of any command over their appetites, that, from their inconſiderate waſte, they often feel the calamities of famine as ſeverely as the rudeſt of the ſavage tribes. What they ſuffer one year does not augment their induſtry, or render them more provident to prevent ſimilar diſtreſſes [h]. This inconſiderate thoughtleſſneſs about futurity, the effect of ignorance and the

[h] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 338. Lettr. Edif. 23. 298. Deſcript. of N. France, Oſborn's Collect. ii. 880. De la Potherie, ii. 63.

cauſe

cauſe of ſloth, accompanies and characterizes man in every ſtage of ſavage life [i]; and by a capricious ſingularity in his operations, he is then leaſt ſolicitous about ſupplying his wants, when the means of ſatisfying them are moſt precarious, and procured with the greateſt difficulty [k].

Their ſocial ſtate.

III. AFTER viewing the bodily conſtitution of the Americans, and contemplating the powers of their minds, we are led, in the natural order of inquiry, to conſider them as united together in ſociety. Hitherto our reſearches have been confined to the operations of underſtanding reſpecting themſelves, as individuals, now they will extend to the degree of their ſenſibility and affection towards their ſpecies.

Domeſtic union.

THE domeſtic ſtate is the firſt and moſt ſimple form of human aſſociation. The union of the ſexes, among different animals, is of longer or ſhorter duration in proportion to the eaſe or difficulty of rearing their offſpring. Among thoſe tribes where the ſeaſon of infancy is ſhort, and the young ſoon acquire vigour or agility, no permanent union is formed. Nature commits the care of training up the offſpring to the mother alone, and her tenderneſs, without any other aſſiſtance, is equal to the taſk. But where the ſtate of infancy is long and helpleſs, and the joint aſſiduity of both parents is requiſite in tending their feeble brood, there a more intimate connection takes place, and continues until the purpoſe of nature be accompliſhed, and the new race grow up to full maturity. As the infancy of man is more feeble and helpleſs than that of any other animal, and he is dependent, during a much longer period, on the care and foreſight of his parents, the union between huſband and wife

[i] Bancroft's Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, 326. 333.
[k] See NOTE XXIV.

came

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came early to be conſidered, not only as a ſolemn, but as a permanent contract. A general ſtate of promiſcuous intercourſe between the ſexes never exiſted but in the imagination of poets. In the infancy of ſociety, when men, deſtitute of arts and induſtry, lead a hard precarious life, the rearing of their progeny demands the attention and efforts of both parents; and if their union had not been formed and continued with this view, the race could not have been preſerved. Accordingly, in America, even among the rudeſt tribes, a regular union between huſband and wife was univerſal, and the rights of marriage were underſtood and recognized. In thoſe diſtricts where ſubſiſtence was ſcanty, and the difficulty of maintaining a family was great, the man confined himſelf to one wife. In warmer or more fertile provinces, the facility of procuring food concurred with the influence of climate, in inducing the inhabitants to increaſe the number of their wives[l]. In ſome countries the marriage union ſubſiſted during life; in others, the impatience of the Americans under reſtraint of any ſpecies, together with their natural levity and caprice, prompted them to diſſolve it on very ſlight pretexts, and often without aſſigning any cauſe[m].

Condition of women.

But whether they conſidered the obligation of this contract as perpetual, or only temporary, the condition of women was equally humiliating and miſerable. Whether man has been improved by the progreſs of arts and civilization in ſociety, is a queſtion, which, in the wantonneſs of diſputation, has been agitated among philoſophers. That women are indebted to the refinements of poliſhed

[l] Lettr. Edif. 23. 318. Lafitau Moeurs, i. 554. Lery ap de Bry, iii. 234. Journal de Grillet et Bechamel, p. 88.

[m] Lafitau, i. 580. Joutel Journ. Hiſtor. 345. Lozano Deſcr. del Gran Chaco. 70. Hennepin Moeurs des Sauvages, p. 30. 33.

manners

manners for a happy change in their ſtate, is a point which can admit of no doubt. To deſpiſe and to degrade the female ſex, is the characteriſtic of the ſavage ſtate in every part of the globe. Man, proud of excelling in ſtrength and in courage, the chief marks of pre-eminence among rude people, treats woman, as an inferior, with diſdain. The Americans, perhaps from that coldneſs and inſenſibility which has been conſidered as peculiar to their conſtitution, add neglect and harſhneſs to contempt. The moſt intelligent travellers have been ſtruck with this inattention of the Americans to their women. It is not, as I have already obſerved, by a ſtudied diſplay of tenderneſs and attachment, that the American endeavours to gain the heart of the woman whom he wiſhes to marry. Marriage itſelf, inſtead of being an union of affection and intereſt between equals, becomes, among them, the unnatural conjunction of a maſter with his ſlave. It is the obſervation of an author, whoſe opinions are deſervedly of great weight, that wherever wives are purchaſed, their condition is extremely depreſſed [n]. They become the property and the ſlaves of thoſe who buy them. In whatever part of the globe this cuſtom prevails, the obſervation holds. In countries where refinement has made ſome progreſs, women, excluded from ſociety, and ſhut up in ſequeſtered apartments, are kept under the vigilant guard of their maſters. In ruder nations, they are degraded to the meaneſt functions. Among many people of America the marriage-contract is properly a purchaſe. The man buys his wife of her parents. Though unacquainted with the uſe of money, or with ſuch commercial tranſactions as take place in more improved ſociety, he knows how to give an equivalent for any object which he deſires to poſſeſs. In ſome places

[n] Sketches of Hiſt. of Man, i. 184.

the

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the ſuitor devotes his ſervice for a certain time to the parents of the maid whom he courts; in others, he hunts for them occaſionally, or aſſiſts in cultivating their fields, and forming their canoes; in others, he offers preſents of ſuch things as are deemed moſt valuable on account of their uſefulneſs or rarity [o]. In return for theſe, he receives his wife: and this circumſtance, added to the low eſtimation of women among ſavages, leads him to conſider her as a female ſervant whom he has acquired, and whom he has a title to treat as an inferior. In all unpoliſhed nations, it is true, the functions in domeſtic œconomy, which fall naturally to the ſhare of women, are ſo many, that they are ſubjected to hard labour, and muſt bear more than their full portion of the common burden. But in America their condition is ſo peculiarly grievous, and their depreſſion ſo complete, that ſervitude is a name too mild to deſcribe their wretched ſtate. A wife, among moſt tribes, is no better than a beaſt of burden, deſtined to every office of labour and fatigue. While the men loiter out the day in ſloth, or ſpend it in amuſement, the women are condemned to inceſſant toil. Taſks are impoſed upon them without pity, and ſervices are received without complacence or gratitude [p]. Every circumſtance reminds women of this mortifying inferiority. They muſt approach their lords with reverence; they muſt regard them as more exalted beings, and are not permitted to eat in their preſence [q]. There are diſtricts in America where this dominion is ſo grievous, and ſo ſenſibly felt, that ſome women, in a wild emotion of maternal tenderneſs, have deſtroyed their female

[o] Lafitau Moeurs, &c. i. 560, &c. Charlev. iii. 285, &c. Herrera, dec. 4. lib. iv. c. 7. Dumont, ii. 156.

[p] Tertre, ii. 382. Borde Relat. des Moeurs des Caraibes, p. 21. Biet, 357. Condamine, p. 110. Fermin. i. 79.

[q] Gumilla, i. 153. Barrere, 164. Labat. Voy. ii. 78. Chanvalon, 51. Tertre, ii. 390.

children

children in their infancy, in order to deliver them from that intolerable bondage to which they knew they were doomed [r]. Thus the firſt inſtitution of ſocial life is perverted. That ſtate of domeſtic union towards which nature leads the human ſpecies, in order to ſoften the heart to gentleneſs and humanity, is rendered ſo unequal, as to eſtabliſh a cruel diſtinction between the ſexes, which forms the one to be harſh and unfeeling, and humbles the other to ſervility and ſubjection.

Their women not prolific.

It is owing, perhaps, in ſome meaſure, to this ſtate of depreſſion, that women in rude nations are far from being prolific [s]. The vigour of their conſtitution is exhauſted by exceſſive fatigue, and the wants and diſtreſſes of ſavage life are ſo numerous, as to force them to take various precautions in order to prevent too rapid an increaſe of their progeny. Among wandering tribes, or ſuch as depend chiefly upon hunting for ſubſiſtence, the mother cannot attempt to rear a ſecond child, until the firſt has attained ſuch a degree of vigour as to be in ſome meaſure independent of her care. From this motive, it is the univerſal practice of the American women to nurſe their children during ſeveral years [t]; and as they ſeldom marry early, the period of their fertility is over, before they can finiſh the long but neceſſary attendance upon two or three ſucceſſive children [u]. Among ſome of the leaſt poliſhed tribes, whoſe induſtry and foreſight does not extend ſo far as to make any regular proviſion for their own ſubſiſtence, it is a maxim not to burden themſelves with rearing more than two children [x];

[r] Gumilla, ii. 233. 238. Herrera, dec. 7. lib. ix. c. 4.

[s] Lafitau, i. 590. Charlevoix, iii. 304. [t] Herrera, dec. 6. lib. i. c. 4. [u] Charlev. iii. 303. Dumont Mem. ſur Louiſiane, ii. 270. Denys Hiſt. Natur. de l'Amerique, &c. ii. 365. Charlev. Hiſt. de Parag. ii. 422.

[x] Techo's Account of Paraguay, &c. Church. Collect. vi. 108. Lett. Edif. 24. 200. Lozano Deſcr. 92.

and

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and no ſuch numerous families, as are frequent in civilized ſociety, are to be found among men in this ſtate [y]. When twins are born, one of them commonly is abandoned, becauſe the mother is not equal to the taſk of educating both [z]. When a mother dies while ſhe is nurſing a child, all hope of preſerving its life fails, and it is buried together with her in the ſame grave [a]. As the parents are frequently expoſed to want by their own improvident indolence, the difficulty of ſuſtaining their children becomes ſo great, that it is not uncommon to abandon or deſtroy them [b]. Thus their experience of the difficulty of training up an infant to maturity, amidſt the hardſhips of ſavage life, often ſtifles the voice of nature among the Americans, and ſuppreſſes the ſtrong emotions of parental tenderneſs.

Parental affection and filial duty.

But, though neceſſity compels the inhabitants of America thus to ſet bounds to the increaſe of their families, they are not deficient in affection and attachment to their offſpring. They feel the power of this inſtinct in its full force, and as long as their progeny continue feeble and helpleſs, no people exceed them in tenderneſs and care [c]. But in rude nations, the dependence of children upon their parents is of ſhorter continuance than in poliſhed ſocieties. When men muſt be trained to the various functions of civil life by previous diſcipline and education, when the knowledge of abſtruſe ſciences muſt be taught, and dexterity in intricate arts muſt be acquired, before a young man is prepared to begin his career of action, the attentive feelings of a parent are not confined to the

[y] Maccleur's Journal, 63. See NOTE XXV. [z] Lett. Edif. x. 200. [a] Charlev. iii. 368. Lett. Edif. x. 200. P. Melch. Hernandez Memor. de Cheriqui. Colbert, Collect. Orig. Pap. i. [b] Venegas Hiſt. of Californ. i. 82. [c] Gumilla, i. 211. Biet. 390.

years

years of infancy, but extend to the eſtabliſhment of his child in the world. Even then, his ſolicitude does not terminate. His protection may ſtill be requiſite, and his wiſdom and experience ſtill prove uſeful guides. Thus a permanent connection is formed; parental tenderneſs is exerciſed, and filial reſpect returned, throughout the whole courſe of life. But in the ſimplicity of the ſavage ſtate, the affection of parents, like the inſtinctive fondneſs of animals, ceaſes almoſt entirely as ſoon as their offſpring attain maturity. Little inſtruction fits them for that mode of life to which they are deſtined. The parents, as if their duty were accompliſhed, when they have conducted their children through the helpleſs years of infancy, leave them afterwards at entire liberty. They ſeldom adviſe or admoniſh, they never chide or chaſtiſe them. They ſuffer them to be abſolute maſters of their own actions[b]. In an American hut, a father, a mother, and their poſterity, live together like perſons aſſembled by accident, without ſeeming to feel the obligation of the duties mutually ariſing from this connection[c]. As filial love is not cheriſhed by the continuance of attention or good offices, the recollection of benefits received in early infancy is too faint to excite it. Conſcious of their own liberty, and impatient of reſtraint, the youth of America are accuſtomed to act as if they were totally independent. Their parents are not objects of greater regard than other perſons. They treat them always with neglect, and often with ſuch harſhneſs and inſolence, as to fill thoſe who have been wit-

[b] Charlev. iii. 272. Biet. 390. Gumilla, i. 212. Lafitau, i. 602. Creuxii. Hiſt. Canad. p. 71. Fernandez. Relac. Hiſt. de los Chequit. 33.

[c] Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 273.

neſſes

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neſſes of their conduct with horror [d]. Thus the ideas which ſeem to be natural to man in his ſavage ſtate, as they reſult from his circumſtances and condition in that period of his progreſs, affect the two capital relations in domeſtic life. They render the union between huſband and wife unequal. They ſhorten the duration, and weaken the force, of the connection between parents and children.

Political inſtitutions.

IV. From the domeſtic ſtate of the Americans, the tranſition is natural to the conſideration of their civil government and political inſtitutions. In every inquiry concerning the operations of men when united together in ſociety, the firſt object of attention ſhould be their mode of ſubſiſtence. Accordingly as that varies, their laws and policy muſt be different. The inſtitutions ſuited to the ideas and exigencies of tribes, which ſubſiſt chiefly by fiſhing or hunting, and which have hardly formed a conception of any ſpecies of property, will be much more ſimple than thoſe which muſt take place when the earth is cultivated with regular induſtry, and a right of property, not only in its productions, but in the ſoil itſelf, is completely aſcertained.

Mode of ſubſiſtence.

All the people of America, now under review, belong to the former claſs. But though they may all be comprehended under the general denomination of ſavage, the advances which they had made in the art of procuring to themſelves a certain and plentiful ſubſiſtence, were very unequal. On the vaſt plains of South-America, man appears in one

[d] Gumilla, i. 212. Tertre, ii. 376. Charlev. Hiſt. de N. France, iii. 309. Charlev. Hiſt. de Parag. i. 115. Lezano, Deſcrip. del Gran Chaco, p. 68. 100. 101. Fernand. Relac. Hiſtor. de los Chiquit. 426.

of

of the rudeſt ſtates in which he has been ever obſerved, or, perhaps, can exiſt. Several tribes depend entirely upon the bounty of nature for ſubſiſtence. They diſcover no ſolicitude, they employ little foreſight, they ſcarcely exert any induſtry, to ſecure what is neceſſary for their ſupport. The *Topayers* of Braſil, the *Guaxeros* of Tierra-Firmè, the *Caiguas*, the *Moxos*, and ſeveral other people of Paraguay, are unacquainted with every ſpecies of cultivation. They neither ſow nor plant. Even the culture of the manioc, of which caſſada bread is made, is an art too intricate for their ingenuity, or too fatiguing to their indolence. The roots which the earth produces ſpontaneouſly, the fruits, the berries, and ſeeds, which they gather in the woods, together with lizards and other reptiles, which the heat engenders in a fat ſoil, moiſtened by frequent rains, ſupply them with food during ſome part of the year [e]. At other times they ſubſiſt by fiſhing; and nature ſeems to have indulged the lazineſs of the people, by the liberality with which ſhe miniſters, in this way, to their wants. The vaſt rivers of South-America abound with an infinite variety of the moſt delicate fiſh. The lakes and marſhes, formed by the annual overflowing of the waters, are filled with all the different ſpecies, where they remain ſhut up, as in natural reſervoirs, for the uſe of the inhabitants. They ſwarm in ſuch ſhoals, that in ſome places they are catched without art or induſtry [f]. In others, the natives have diſcovered a method of infecting the water with the juice of certain plants, by which the fiſh are ſo intoxicated, that they float on the

By fiſhing.

[e] Nicuhoff. Hiſt. of Braſil. Church Coll. ii. 134. Simon, Conquiſta de Tierra-Firmè, p. 166. Techo, Account of Paraguay, &c. Church. vi. 78. Lettr. Edif. 23. 384. 10. 190. Lozano, Deſcrip. del Gran Chaco, p. 81. Ribas, Hiſtor. de los triumfos, &c. p. 7.

[f] See NOTE XXVI.

ſurface,

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ſurface, and are taken with the hand [g]. Some tribes have ingenuity enough to preſerve them without ſalt, by drying or ſmoaking them upon hurdles over a ſlow fire [h]. The prolific quality of the rivers in South-America induces many of the natives to reſort to their banks, and to depend almoſt entirely for nouriſhment on what their waters ſupply with ſuch profuſion [i]. In this part of the globe, hunting ſeems not to have been the firſt employment of men, or the firſt effort of their invention and labour to obtain food. They were fiſhers before they became hunters; and as the occupations of the former do not call for equal exertions of activity, or talents, with thoſe of the latter, people in that ſtate appear to poſſeſs neither the ſame degree of enterpriſe, nor of ingenuity. The petty nations, adjacent to the Maragnon and Orinoco, are manifeſtly the moſt inactive and leaſt intelligent of all the Americans.

By hunting.

None but tribes contiguous to great rivers can ſuſtain themſelves in this manner. The greater part of the American nations, diſperſed over the foreſts with which their country is covered, do not procure ſubſiſtence with the ſame facility. For although theſe foreſts, eſpecially in the ſouthern continent of America, are ſtored plentifully with game [k], conſiderable efforts of activity and ingenuity are requiſite in purſuit of it. Neceſſity incited them to the one, and taught them the other. Hunting became their principal occupation; and as it called forth ſtrenuous exertions of courage, of force, and of in-

[g] See NOTE XXVII.

[h] Condam, 159. Gumilla, ii. 37. Lettr. Edif. 14. 199. 23. 328. Acugna, Relat. de la Riv. des Amaz. 138.

[i] Barrere, Relat. de Fr. Equin. p. 155.

[k] P. Martyr, Decad. p. 324. Gumilla, ii. 4, &c. Acugna, i. 156.

vention,

vention, it was deemed a function no leſs honourable than neceſſary. This was peculiar to the men. They were trained to it from their earlieſt youth. A bold and dextrous hunter ranked next in fame to the diſtinguiſhed warrior, and an alliance with the former is often courted in preference to one with the latter [l]. Hardly any device, which the ingenuity of man has diſcovered for enſnaring or deſtroying wild animals, was unknown to the Americans. While engaged in this favourite exerciſe, they ſhake off the indolence peculiar to their nature, the latent powers and vigour of their minds are rouſed, and they become active, perſevering, and indefatigable. Their ſagacity in finding their prey, and their addreſs in killing it, are equal. Their reaſon and their ſenſes, being conſtantly directed towards this one object, the former diſplays ſuch fertility of invention, and the latter acquire ſuch a degree of acuteneſs, as appear almoſt incredible. They diſcern the footſteps of a wild beaſt, which eſcape every other eye, and can follow them with certainty through the pathleſs foreſt. If they attack their game openly, their arrow ſeldom errs from the mark [m]; if they endeavour to circumvent it by art, it is almoſt impoſſible to avoid their toils. Among ſeveral tribes, their young men were not permitted to marry, until they had given ſuch proofs of their ſkill in hunting as put it beyond doubt that they were capable of providing for a family. Their ingenuity always on the ſtretch, and ſharpened by emulation, as well as neceſſity, has ſtruck out many inventions, which greatly facilitate ſucceſs in the chaſe. The moſt ſingular of theſe is the diſcovery of a poiſon in which they dip the arrows employed in hunting. The ſlighteſt

[l] Charlev. Hiſtoire de la N. France, iii. 115.

[m] Biet Voy. de France Equin. 357. Davies' Diſcov. of the River of Amaz. Purchaſ. iv. p. 1287.

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wound with thoſe envenomed ſhafts is mortal. If they only pierce the ſkin, the blood fixes and congeals in a moment, and the ſtrongeſt animal falls motionleſs to the ground. Nor does this poiſon, notwithſtanding its violence and ſubtlety, infect the fleſh of the animal which it kills. That may be eaten with perfect ſafety, and retains its native reliſh and qualities. All the nations along the Maragnon and Orinoco are acquainted with this compoſition, the chief ingredient in which is the juice extracted from the root of the *curare*, a ſpecies of withe [n]. In other parts of America, they employ the juice of the *manchenille* for the ſame purpoſe, and it operates with a no leſs fatal activity. To people poſſeſſed of thoſe ſecrets, the bow is a more deſtructive weapon than the muſket, and, in their ſkilful hands, does great execution among the birds and beaſts which abound in the foreſts of America.

By agriculture.

But the life of a hunter gradually leads man to a ſtate more advanced. The chaſe, even where prey is abundant, and the dexterity of the hunter much improved, affords but an uncertain maintenance, and at ſome ſeaſons it muſt be ſuſpended altogether. If a ſavage truſts to his bow alone for food, he and his family will be often reduced to extreme diſtreſs [o]. Hardly any region of the earth furniſhes man ſpontaneouſly with what his wants require. In the mildeſt climates, and moſt fertile ſoils, his own induſtry and foreſight muſt be exerted, in ſome degree, to ſecure a regular ſupply of food. Their experience of this ſurmounts the abhorrence of labour natural to ſavage nations, and compels them to have recourſe to culture, as ſubſidiary to hunting. In particular ſituations, ſome

[n] Gumilla, ii. 1. &c. Condam. 208. Recherch. Philoſ. ii. 239. Bancroft Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, 281, &c.

[o] See NOTE XXVIII.

ſmall

ſmall tribes may ſubſiſt by fiſhing, independent of any production of the earth, raiſed by their own induſtry. But throughout all America, we ſcarcely meet with any nation of hunters, which does not practiſe ſome ſpecies of cultivation.

The various fruits of their culture.

THEIR agriculture, however, is neither extenſive nor laborious. As game and fiſh are their principal food, all they aim at by cultivation, is to ſupply any occaſional defect of theſe. In the ſouthern continent of America, the natives confined their induſtry to rearing a few plants, which, in a rich ſoil and warm climate, were eaſily trained to maturity. The chief of theſe is *Maize*, well known in Europe by the name of Turkey or Indian wheat, a grain extremely prolific, of ſimple culture, agreeable to the taſte, and affording a ſtrong hearty nouriſhment. The ſecond is the *manioc*, which grows to the ſize of a large ſhrub, or ſmall tree, and produces roots ſomewhat reſembling parſnips. After carefully ſqueezing out the juice, theſe roots are grated down to a fine powder, and formed into thin cakes, called *Caſſada* bread, which, though inſipid to the taſte, proves no contemptible food [P]. As the juice of the manioc is a deadly poiſon, ſome authors have celebrated the ingenuity of the Americans, in converting a noxious plant into wholeſome nouriſhment. But it ſhould rather be conſidered as one of the deſperate expedients for procuring ſubſiſtence, to which neceſſity reduces rude nations; or, perhaps, men were led to the uſe of it by a progreſs, in which there is nothing marvellous. One ſpecies of manioc is altogether free of any poiſonous quality, and may be eaten without any preparation but that of roaſting it in the em-

[P] Sloane Hiſt. of Jam. Introd. p. 18. Labat. i. 394. Acoſta Hiſt. Ind. Occid. Natur. lib. iv. c. 17. Ulloa, i. 62. Aublet Mem. ſur le Magnioc. Hiſt. de Plantes, tom. ii. p. 65, &c.

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bers. This, it is probable, was firſt uſed by the Americans as food; and neceſſity having gradually taught them the art of ſeparating its pernicious juice from the other ſpecies, they have by experience found it to be the moſt prolific as well as the moſt nouriſhing plant of the two [q]. The third is the *plantain*, which though it riſes to the height of a tree, is of ſuch quick growth, that in leſs than a year it rewards the induſtry of the cultivator with its fruit. This, when roaſted, ſupplies the place of bread, and is both palatable and nouriſhing [r]. The fourth is the *potatoe*, whoſe culture and qualities are too well known to need any deſcription. The fifth is *pimento*, a ſmall tree, yielding a ſtrong aromatic ſpice. The Americans, who, like other inhabitants of warm climates, delight in whatever is hot and of poignant flavour, deem this ſeaſoning a neceſſary of life, and mingle it copiouſly with every kind of food they take [s].

Such are the various productions, which were the chief object of culture among the hunting tribes on the continent of America, and with a moderate exertion of active and provident induſtry, theſe might have yielded a full ſupply to the wants of a numerous people. But men, accuſtomed to the free and vagrant life of hunters, are incapable of regular application to labour; and conſider agriculture as a ſecondary and inferior occupation. Accordingly, the proviſion for ſubſiſtence, ariſing from cultivation, was ſo limited and ſcanty among the Americans, that, upon any accidental failure of their uſual ſucceſs in hunting, they were often reduced to extreme diſtreſs.

[q] Martyr Decad. 301. Labat. i. 411. Gumilla, iii. 192. Machuca Milic Indiana, 164. See NOTE XXIX.

[r] See NOTE XXX.

[s] Gumilla, iii. 171. Acoſta, lib. iv. c. 20.

In

In the iſlands, the mode of ſubſiſting was conſiderably different. None of the large animals which abound on the continent were known there. Only four ſpecies of quadrupeds, beſides a kind of ſmall dumb dog, exiſted in the iſlands, the biggeſt of which did not exceed the ſize of a rabbit [u]. To hunt ſuch diminutive prey, was an occupation which required no effort either of activity or courage. The chief employment of a hunter in the iſles was to kill kirds, which on the continent are deemed ignoble game, and left chiefly to the purſuit of boys [x]. This want of animals, as well as their peculiar ſituation, led the iſlanders to depend principally upon fiſhing for their ſubſiſtence [y]. Their rivers, and the ſea with which they are ſurrounded, ſupplied them with this ſpecies of food. At ſome particular ſeaſons, turtle, crabs, and other ſhell-fiſh, abounded in ſuch numbers, that they could ſupport themſelves with a facility in which their indolence delighted [z]. At other times, they ate lizards, and various reptiles of odious forms [a]. To fiſhing, the inhabitants of the iſlands added ſome degree of agriculture. Maize [b], manioc, and other plants, were cultivated in the ſame manner as on the continent. But all the fruits of their induſtry, together with what their ſoil and climate produced ſpontaneouſly, afforded them but a ſcanty maintenance. Though their demands for food were very ſparing, they hardly raiſed what was ſufficient for their own conſumption. If a few Spaniards ſettled in any diſtrict, ſuch a ſmall addition of ſupernumerary mouths ſoon exhauſted their ſcanty ſtores, and brought on a famine.

Their agriculture very limited.

[u] Oviedo, lib. xii. in proem. [x] Ribas Hiſt. de los triumph. p. 13. De la Potherie, ii. 33. iii. 20. [y] Oviedo, lib. xiii. c. 1. Gomara Hiſt. Gener. c. 28. [z] Gomara Hiſt. Gener. c. 9. Labat, ii. 221, &c. [a] Oviedo, lib. xiii. c. 3. [b] See NOTE XXXI.

Two

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Two causes of its imperfection.

Two circumstances, common to all the savages nations of America, concurred with those which I have already mentioned, not only in rendering their agriculture imperfect, but in circumscribing their power in all their operations. They had no tame animals; and they were unacquainted with the use of metals.

The want of tame animals.

In other parts of the globe, man, in his rudest state, appears as lord of the creation, giving law to various tribes of animals, which he has tamed and reduced to subjection. The Tartar follows his prey on the horse which he has reared; or tends his numerous herds, which furnish him both with food and cloathing; the Arab has rendered the camel docile, and avails himself of its persevering strength; the Laplander has formed the rein-deer to be subservient to his will; and even the people of Kamchatka have trained their dogs to labour. This command over the inferior creatures is one of the noblest prerogatives of man, and among the greatest efforts of his wisdom and power. Without this, his dominion is incomplete. He is a monarch, who has no subjects; a master, without servants, and must perform every operation by the strength of his own arm. Such was the condition of all the rude nations in America. Their reason was so little improved, or their union so incomplete, that they seem not to have been conscious of the superiority of their nature, and suffered all the animal creation to retain its liberty, without establishing their own authority over any one species. Most of the animals, indeed, which have been rendered domestic in our continent, do not exist in the New World; but those peculiar to it are neither so fierce, nor so formidable, as to have exempted them from servitude. There are some animals of the same species in both continents. But the rein-deer, which

which has been tamed and broken to the yoke in the one hemiſphere, runs wild in the other. The *biſon* of America is manifeſtly of the ſame ſpecies with the horned cattle of the other hemiſphere [c]. Theſe, even among the rudeſt nations in our continent, have been rendered domeſtic; and in conſequence of his dominion over them, man can accompliſh works of labour with greater facility, and has made a vaſt addition to his means of ſubſiſtence. The inhabitants of many regions in the New World, where the biſon abounds, might have derived the ſame advantages from it. It is not of a nature ſo indocile, but that it might have been trained to be as ſubſervient to man as our cattle [d]. But a ſavage, in that uncultivated ſtate wherein the Americans were diſcovered, is the enemy of the other animals, not their ſuperior. He waſtes and deſtroys, but knows not how to multiply or to govern them [e].

THIS, perhaps, is the moſt notable diſtinction between the inhabitants of the Ancient and New Worlds, and a high pre-eminence of civilized men above ſuch as continue rude. The greateſt operations of man in changing and improving the face of nature, as well as his moſt conſiderable efforts in cultivating the earth, are accompliſhed by means of the aid which he receives from the animals whom he has tamed and employs in labour. It is by their ſtrength that he ſubdues the ſtubborn ſoil, and converts the deſert or marſh into a fruitful field. But man, in his civilized ſtate, is ſo accuſtomed to the ſervice of the domeſtic animals, that he ſeldom reflects upon the vaſt benefits which he derives from it. If we were to ſuppoſe him, even when

[c] Buffon, Artic. *Biſon*.

[d] Nouv. Decouverte par Hennepin, p. 192. Kalm. i. 207.

[e] Buffon Hiſt. Nat. ix. 85. Hiſt. Philoſ. et Polit. des Etabliſſem. des Europ. dans les deux Indes, vi. 364.

moſt

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moſt improved, to be deprived of their uſeful miniſtry, his empire over nature muſt in ſome meaſure ceaſe, and he would remain a feeble animal, at a loſs how to ſubſiſt, and incapable of attempting ſuch arduous undertakings as their aſſiſtance enables him to execute with eaſe.

Want of the uſeful metals.

It is a doubtful point, whether the dominion of man over the animal creation, or his acquiring the uſe of metals, has contributed moſt to extend his power. The æra of this important diſcovery is unknown, and in our hemiſphere very remote. It is only by tradition, or by digging up ſome rude inſtruments of our forefathers, that we learn that mankind were originally unacquainted with the uſe of metals, and endeavoured to ſupply the want of them by employing flints, ſhells, bones, and other hard ſubſtances, for the ſame purpoſes which metals ſerve among poliſhed nations. Nature completes the formation of ſome metals. Gold, ſilver, and copper, are found in their perfect ſtate, in the clefts of rocks, in the ſides of mountains, or the channels of rivers. Theſe were accordingly the metals firſt known, and firſt applied to uſe. But iron, the moſt ſerviceable of all, and to which man is moſt indebted, is never diſcovered in its perfect form; its groſs and ſtubborn ore muſt feel twice the force of fire, and go through two laborious proceſſes, before it become fit for uſe. Man was long acquainted with the other metals, before he acquired the art of fabricating iron, or attained ſuch ingenuity as to perfect an invention, to which he is indebted for thoſe inſtruments wherewith he ſubdues the earth, and commands all its inhabitants. But in this, as well as in many other reſpects, the inferiority of the Americans was conſpicuous. All the ſavage tribes, ſcattered over the continent and iſlands, were totally unacquainted with

with the metals which the ſoil produces in great abundance, if we except ſome trifling quantity of gold, which they picked up in the torrents that deſcended from their mountains, and formed into ornaments. Their devices, to ſupply this want of the ſerviceable metals, were extremely rude and aukward. The moſt ſimple operation was to them an undertaking of immenſe difficulty and labour. To fell a tree with no other inſtruments than hatchets of ſtone, was employment for a month [f]. To form a canoe into ſhape, and to hollow it, conſumed years; and it frequently began to rot before they were able to finiſh it [g]. Their operations in agriculture were equally ſlow and defective. In a country covered with woods of the hardeſt timber, the clearing of a ſmall field deſtined for culture required the united efforts of a tribe, and was a work of much time and great toil. This was the buſineſs of the men, and their indolence was ſatisfied with performing it in a very ſlovenly manner. The labour of cultivation was left to the women, who after digging, or rather ſtirring the field, with wooden mattocks, and ſtakes hardened in the fire, ſowed or planted it; but were more indebted for the increaſe to the fertility of the ſoil, than to their own rude induſtry [h].

AGRICULTURE, even when the ſtrength of man is ſeconded by that of the animals which he has ſubjected to the yoke, and his power augmented by the uſe of the various inſtruments with which the diſcovery of metals has furniſhed him, is ſtill a work of great labour; and it is with the ſweat of his brow that he renders the earth fertile. It is not wonderful, then, that people deſtitute of both

[f] Gumilla, iii. 196.
[g] Borde Relat. des Caraibes, p. 22.
[h] Gumilla, iii. 166, &c. Lettr. Edif. xii. 10.

theſe

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these advantages should have made so little progress in cultivation, that they must be considered as depending for subsistence on fishing and hunting, rather than on the fruits of their own labour.

Political institutions arising from this state.

FROM this description of the mode of subsisting among the rude American tribes, the form and genius of their political institutions may be deduced, and we are enabled to trace various circumstances of distinction between them and more civilized nations.

Divided into small communities.

1. THEY were divided into small independent communities. While hunting is the chief source of subsistence, a vast extent of territory is requisite for supporting a small number of people. In proportion as men multiply and unite, the wild animals, on which they prey, diminish, or fly at a greater distance from the haunts of their enemy. The increase of a society in this state is limited by its own nature, and the members of it must either disperse, like the game which they pursue, or fall upon some better method of procuring food, than by hunting. Beasts of prey are by nature solitary and unsocial, they go not forth to the chase in herds, but delight in those recesses of the forest where they can roam and destroy undisturbed. A nation of hunters resembles them, both in occupation and in genius. They cannot form into large communities, because it would be impossible to find subsistence, and they must drive to a distance every rival who may encroach on those domains, which they consider as their own. This was the state of all the American tribes, the numbers in each were small, though scattered over vast countries; they were far removed from one another, and engaged in perpetual hostilities or rivalship [1]. In America, the

[1] Lozano, Descrip. del Gran Chaco, 59. 62. Fernandez, Relac. Hist. de los Chiquit. 162.

word

word *nation* is not of the ſame import as in other parts of the globe. It is applied to ſmall ſocieties, not exceeding, perhaps, two or three hundred perſons, but occupying provinces larger than ſome kingdoms in Europe. The country of Guiana, though of larger extent than the kingdom of France, and divided among a great number of nations, did not contain above twenty-five thouſand inhabitants [k]. In the provinces which border on the Orinoco, one may travel ſeveral hundred miles in different directions, without finding a ſingle hut, or obſerving the footſteps of a human creature [l]. In North America, where the climate is more rigorous, and the ſoil leſs fertile, the deſolation is ſtill greater. There, vaſt journeys of ſome hundred leagues have been made through uninhabited plains and foreſts [m]. As long as hunting continues to be the chief employment of man to which he truſts for ſubſiſtence, he can hardly be ſaid to have occupied the earth [n].

Unacquainted with the idea of property.

2. NATIONS which depend upon hunting are ſtrangers to the idea of property. As the animals on which the hunter feeds are not bred under his inſpection, nor nouriſhed by his care, he can claim no right to them, while they run wild in the foreſt. Where game is ſo plentiful that it may be catched with little trouble, men never dream of appropriating what is of ſmall value, or of eaſy acquiſition. Where it is ſo rare, that the labour or danger of the chaſe requires the united efforts of a tribe, or village, what is killed is a common ſtock, belonging

[k] Voyages de Marchais, iv. 353.

[l] Gumilla, ii. 101.

[m] M. Fabry, quoted by Buffon, iii. 488. Lafitau, ii. 179. Boſſu, Travels through Louiſiana, i. 111. See NOTE XXXII.

[n] See NOTE XXXIII.

equally

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equally to all, who, by their ſkill or their courage, have contributed to the ſucceſs of the excurſion. The foreſt, or hunting-grounds, are deemed the property of the tribe, from which it has a title to exclude every rival nation. But no individual arrogates a right to any diſtrict of theſe, in preference to his fellow-citizens. They belong alike to all; and thither, as to a general and undivided ſtore, all repair in queſt of ſuſtenance. The ſame principles, by which they regulate their chief occupation, extend to that which is ſubordinate. Even agriculture has not introduced among them a complete idea of property. As the men hunt, the women labour together, and after they have ſhared the toils of the ſeed-time, they enjoy the harveſt in common [o]. Among ſome tribes, the increaſe of their cultivated lands is depoſited in a public granary, and divided among them, at ſtated times, according to their wants [p]. Among others, though they lay up ſeparate ſtores, they do not acquire ſuch an excluſive right of property, that they can enjoy ſuperfluity, while thoſe around them ſuffer want [q]. Thus the diſtinctions ariſing from the inequality of poſſeſſions are unknown. The terms rich or poor enter not into their language, and being ſtrangers to property, they are unacquainted with that, which is the great object of laws and policy, as well as the chief motive which induced mankind to eſtabliſh the various arrangements of regular government [r].

High ſenſe of equality and independence.

3. PEOPLE in this ſtate retain a high ſenſe of equality and independence. Wherever the idea of property is not eſtabliſhed, there can be no diſtinc-

[o] Dr. Ferguſon's Eſſay, 125.

[p] Gumilla, i. 265. Brickell, Hiſt. of N. Carol. 327. See NOTE XXXIV.

[q] Denys, Hiſt. Natur. ii. 392, 393.

[r] P. Martyr, Decad, p. 45. Veneg. Hiſt. of Caliſorn. i. 66. Lery, Navig. in Braſil, c. 17.

tion

tion among men, but what ariſes from perſonal qualities. Theſe can be conſpicuous only on ſuch occaſions as call them forth into exertion. In times of danger, or in affairs of intricacy, the wiſdom and experience of age are conſulted, and preſcribe the meaſures which ought to be purſued. When they take the field againſt the enemies of their country, the warrior of moſt approved courage leads the youth to the combat [s]. If they go forth in a body to the chaſe, the moſt expert and adventurous hunter is foremoſt, and directs their motions. But during ſeaſons of tranquillity and inaction, when there is no occaſion to diſplay thoſe talents, all pre-eminence ceaſes. Every circumſtance indicates, that all the members of the community are on a level. They are clothed in the ſame ſimple garb. They feed on the ſame plain fare. Their houſes and furniture are exactly ſimilar. No diſtinction can ariſe from the inequality of poſſeſſions. Whatever forms dependence on one part, or conſtitutes ſuperiority on the other, is unknown. All are freemen, all feel themſelves to be ſuch, and aſſert with firmneſs the rights which belong to that condition [t]. This ſentiment of independence is imprinted ſo deeply in their nature, that no change of condition can eradicate it and bend their minds to ſervitude. Accuſtomed to be abſolute maſters of their own conduct, they diſdain to execute the orders of another, and, having never known control, will not ſubmit to correction [u]. Many of the Americans, when they found that they were treated as ſlaves by Spaniards, died of grief; many deſtroyed themſelves in deſpair [x].

[s] Acoſta, Hiſt. lib. vi. c. 19. Stadius, Hiſt. Braſil, lib. ii. c. 13. De Bry, iii. p. 110. Biet, 361.

[t] Labat, vi. 124. Brickell, Hiſt. of Carol. 310.

[u] See NOTE XXXV.

[x] Oviedo, lib. iii. c. 6. p. 97. Vega, Conquiſt. de la Florida, i. 30. ii. 416. Labat. ii. 138. Benzo, Hiſt. Nov. Orb. lib. iv. c. 25.

4. AMONG

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Senſe of ſubordination imperfect.

4. Among people in this ſtate, government can aſſume little authority, and the ſenſe of civil ſubordination muſt remain very imperfect. While the idea of property is unknown, or incompletely conceived, and the ſpontaneous productions of the earth, as well as the fruits of induſtry, are conſidered as belonging to the public ſtock, there can hardly be any ſuch ſubject of difference or diſcuſſion among the members of the ſame community, as will require the hand of authority to interpoſe in order to adjuſt it. Where the right of ſeparate and excluſive poſſeſſion is not introduced, the great object of law and juriſdiction does not exiſt. When called into the field, either in their own defence, or to invade the territories of their enemies, when engaged in the toil and dangers of the chaſe, the members of a tribe perceive that they are part of a political body. They are conſcious of their own connection with the companions in conjunction with whom they act; and they follow and reverence ſuch as excel in conduct and valour. But, during the intervals between ſuch common efforts, they are ſcarcely conſcious of the ties of political union [x]. No viſible form of government is eſtabliſhed. The names of *magiſtrate* and *ſubject* are not in uſe. Every one ſeems to enjoy his natural independence almoſt entire. If a ſcheme of public utility be propoſed, the members of the community are left at liberty to chuſe whether they will aſſiſt or not in carrying it into execution. No ſtatute impoſes any ſervice as a duty, no compulſory laws oblige them to perform it. All their reſolutions are voluntary, and flow from the impulſe of their own minds [y]. The firſt ſtep towards eſtabliſhing a public juriſdiction

[x] Lozano, Deſcr. del Gran Chaco, 93. Melendez Teſoros Verdaderos, ii. 23. See NOTE XXXVI.

[y] Charlev. Hiſt. Nov. France, iii. 266. 268.

has

has not been taken in thoſe rude ſocieties. The right of revenge is left in private hands [z]. If violence is committed, or blood is ſhed, the community does not aſſume the power either of inflicting or of moderating the puniſhment. It belongs to the family and friends of the perſon injured or ſlain to avenge the wrong, or to accept of the reparation offered by the aggreſſor. If the elders interpoſe, it is to adviſe, not to decide, and it is ſeldom their counſels are liſtened to; for as it is deemed puſillanimous to ſuffer an offender to eſcape with impunity, reſentment is implacable and everlaſting [a]. The object of government among ſavages is rather foreign than domeſtic. They do not aim at maintaining interior order and police by public regulations, or the exertions of any permanent authority, but labour to preſerve ſuch union among the members of their tribe, that they may watch the motions of their enemies, and act againſt them with concert and vigour.

To what people thoſe deſcriptions apply.

SUCH was the form of political order eſtabliſhed among the greater part of the American nations. In this ſtate were moſt of the tribes, ſpread over the vaſt provinces extending eaſtward of the Miſſiſippi, from the mouth of the St. Laurence to the confines of Florida. In a ſimilar condition were the people of Braſil, the inhabitants of Chili, and ſeveral tribes in Paraguay and Guiana, and in the countries which ſtretch from the mouth of the Orinoco to the peninſula of Yucatan. Among ſuch an infinite number of petty aſſociations, there may be peculiarities which conſtitute a diſtinction, and mark the

[z] Herrera, dec. 8. lib. iv. c. 8.

[a] Charlev. Hiſt. N. France, iii. 271, 272. Laſit. i. 486. Caſſani Hiſt. de Nuevo Reyno de Granada, 226.

various

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various degrees of their civilization and improvement. But an attempt to trace and enumerate theſe would be vain, as they have not been obſerved by perſons, capable of diſcerning the minute and delicate circumſtances, which ſerve to diſcriminate nations reſembling one another in their general character and features. The deſcription which I have given will apply, with little variation, to the policy of every people in America, which to fiſhing and hunting had added ſome degree of agriculture.

RUDE and imperfect as thoſe inſtitutions may appear, ſeveral tribes were not ſo far advanced in their political progreſs. Among all thoſe petty nations which truſted for ſubſiſtence entirely to fiſhing and hunting without any ſpecies of cultivation, the union was ſo incomplete, and the ſenſe of mutual dependence ſo feeble, that hardly any appearance of government or order can be diſcerned in their proceedings. Their wants are few, their objects of purſuit ſimple, they form into ſeparate tribes, and act together, from inſtinct, habit, or conveniency, rather than from any formal concert and aſſociation. To this claſs belong the Californians, ſeveral of the ſmall nations in the extenſive country of Paraguay, ſome of the people on the banks of the Orinoco, and on the river St. Magdalene, in the new kingdom of Granada [b].

Some irregular appearances.

BUT though among theſe laſt-mentioned tribes there was hardly any ſhadow of regular government, and even among thoſe which I firſt deſcribed, its authority is ſlender and confined within narrow bounds, there were ſome places in Ame-

[b] Venegas. i. 68. Lettr. Edif. ii. 176. Techo. Hiſt. of Parag. Churchill, vi. 78. Hiſt. Gen. des Voyages, xiv. 74.

rica

rica where it was carried far beyond the degree which ſeems natural to rude nations. In ſurveying the political operations of man, either in his ſavage or civilized ſtate, we diſcover ſingular and excentric inſtitutions, which ſtart as it were from their ſtation, and fly off ſo wide that we labour in vain to bring them within the general laws of any ſyſtem, or to account for them by thoſe principles which influence other communities in a ſimilar ſituation. Some inſtances of this occur among thoſe people of America, whom I have included under the common denomination of ſavage. Theſe are ſo curious and important that I ſhall deſcribe them, and attempt to explain their origin.

Particularly in ſome of the warmer regions.

In the New World, as well as in others parts of the globe, cold or temperate countries appear to be the favourite ſeat of freedom and independence. There the mind, like the body, is firm and vigorous. Conſcious of their own dignity, and capable of the greateſt efforts in aſſerting it, men aſpire to independence, and their ſtubborn ſpirits ſtoop with reluctance to the yoke of ſervitude. In warmer climates, by whoſe influence the whole frame is ſo much enervated, that preſent pleaſure is the ſupreme felicity, and mere repoſe is enjoyment, men acquieſce, almoſt without a ſtruggle, in the dominion of a ſuperior. Accordingly, if we proceed from north to ſouth along the continent of America, we ſhall find the power of thoſe veſted with authority gradually increaſing, and the ſpirit of the people becoming more tame and paſſive. In Florida, the authority of the ſachems, caziques, or chiefs, was not only permanent, but hereditary. They were diſtinguiſhed by peculiar ornaments, they enjoyed prerogatives of various kinds, and were treated by their ſubjects with that reverence, which people accuſtomed to ſubjection, pay

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Among the Natchez.

to a maſter [c]. Among the nation of the Natchez, ſituated on the banks of the Miſſiſippi, a difference of rank took place, with which the northern tribes were altogether unacquainted. Some families were reputed noble, and enjoyed hereditary dignity. The body of the people was conſidered as vile, and formed only for ſubjection. This diſtinction was marked by appellations which intimated the high elevation of the one ſtate, and the ignominious depreſſion of the other. The former were called *Reſpectable*; the latter, the *Stinkards*. The great Chief, in whom the ſupreme authority was veſted, is reputed to be a being of ſuperior nature, the brother of the Sun, the ſole object of their worſhip. They approach him with religious veneration, and honour him as the repreſentative of their deity. His will is a law, to which all ſubmit with implicit obedience. The lives of his ſubjects are ſo abſolutely at his diſpoſal, that if any one has incurred his diſpleaſure, he comes with profound humility and offers him his head. Nor does their dominion end with their lives; their principal officers, their favourite wives, together with many domeſtics of inferior rank, are ſacrificed at their tombs, they they may be attended in the next world by the ſame perſons who ſerved them in this; and ſuch is the reverence in which they are held, that thoſe victims welcome death with exultation, deeming it a recompence of their fidelity and a mark of diſtinction, to be ſelected to accompany their deceaſed maſter [d]. Thus a perfect deſpotiſm, with its full train of ſuperſtition, arrogance, and cruelty, is eſtabliſhed among the Natchez, and by a ſingular

[c] Cardenas y Cano Enſuyo Chrinol. à la Hiſt. de Florida, p. 46. Le Moyne de Morgues Jeones Floridæ. Ap. de Bry. p. 1. 4, &c. Charlev. Hiſt. N. France, iii. 467, 468.

[d] Dumont Memoir Hiſt. ſur Louiſiane, i. 175. Charlev. Hiſt. N. France, iii. 419, &c. Lettr. Edif. 20. 106. 111.

fatality,

fatality, that people has taſted of the worſe calamities incident to poliſhed nations, though they themſelves are not far advanced beyond the tribes around them in civility and improvement. In Hiſpaniola, Cuba, and the larger iſlands, their caziques or chiefs poſſeſſed extenſive power. The dignity was tranſmitted by hereditary right from father to ſon. Its honours and prerogatives were conſiderable. Their ſubjects paid great reſpect to the caziques, and executed their orders without heſitation or reſerve [e]. They were diſtinguiſhed by peculiar ornaments, and in order to preſerve or augment the veneration of the people, they had the addreſs to call in the aid of ſuperſtition to uphold their authority. They delivered their mandates as the oracles of heaven, and pretended to poſſeſs the power of regulating the ſeaſons, and of diſpenſing rain or ſun-ſhine, according as their ſubjects ſtood in need of them.

In the iſlands.

In ſome parts of the continent, the power of the caziques ſeems to have been as extenſive as in the iſles. In Bogota, which is now a province of the New kingdom of Granada, there was ſettled a nation, more conſiderable in number and more improved in the various arts of life, than any people in America except the Mexicans and Peruvians. They ſubſiſted chiefly by agriculture. The idea of property was introduced among them, and its rights ſecured by laws, handed down by tradition, and obſerved with great care [f]. They lived in large towns. They were clothed in a decent manner, and their houſes may be termed commodious, when compared with thoſe of the people

In Bogota,

[e] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. i. c. 16. lib. iii. c. 44. p. 88. Life of Columb. ch. 32.

[f] Piedrahita Hiſt. de las conquiſt del N. reyno de Gran. p. 46.

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around them. The effects of this uncommon civilization were conſpicuous. Government had aſſumed a regular form. A juriſdiction was eſtabliſhed, which took cognizance of different crimes, and puniſhed them with rigour. A diſtinction of ranks was known; their chief, to whom the Spaniards gave the title of monarch, and who merited that name on account of his ſplendor as well as power, reigned with abſolute authority. He was attended by officers of various conditions; he never appeared in public without a numerous retinue; he was carried in a ſort of palanquin with much pomp, and harbingers went before him to ſweep the road and ſtrew it with flowers. This uncommon pomp was ſupported by preſents or taxes received from his ſubjects, to whom their prince was ſuch an object of veneration, that none of them preſumed to look him directly in the face, or ever approached him but with an averted countenance [g]. There were other tribes on the ſame continent, among which, though far leſs advanced than the people of Bogota in their progreſs towards refinement, the freedom and independence, natural to man in his ſavage ſtate, was much abridged, and their caziques had aſſumed extenſive authority.

Cauſes of thoſe irregular appearances.

It is not eaſy to point out the circumſtances, or to diſcover the cauſes which contributed to introduce and eſtabliſh among each of thoſe people a form of government ſo different from that of the tribes around them, and ſo repugnant to the genius of rude nations. If the perſons who had an opportunity of obſerving them, in their original ſtate, had been more attentive and more diſcern-

[g] Herrera, dec. 6. lib. i. c. 2. lib. v. c. 56. Piedrahita, c. 5. p. 25, &c. Gomara Hiſt. c. 72.

ing,

ing, we might have received information from them ſufficient to guide us in this inquiry. If the tranſactions of people, unacquainted with the uſe of letters, were not involved in impenetrable obſcurity, we might have derived ſome information from that ſource. But as nothing ſatisfactory can be gathered, either from the accounts of the Spaniards, or from their own traditions, we muſt have recourſe to conjectures, in order to explain the irregular appearances in the political ſtate of the people whom I have mentioned. As all thoſe tribes which had loſt their native liberty and independence were ſeated in the Torrid Zone, or in countries approaching to it, the climate may be ſuppoſed to have had ſome influence in forming their minds to that ſervitude, which ſeems to be the deſtiny of man in thoſe regions of the globe. But though the influence of climate, more powerful than that of any other natural cauſe, is not to be overlooked; that alone cannot be admitted as a ſolution of the point in queſtion. The operations of men are ſo complex, that we muſt not attribute the form which they aſſume, to the force of a ſingle principle or cauſe. Although deſpotiſm be confined in America to the Torrid Zone, and to the warm regions bordering upon it, I have already obſerved that theſe countries contain various tribes, ſome of which poſſeſs an high degree of freedom, and others are altogether unacquainted with the reſtraints of government. The indolence and timidity peculiar to the inhabitants of the iſlands, rendered them ſo incapable of the ſentiments or efforts neceſſary for maintaining independence, that there is no occaſion to ſearch for any other cauſe of their tame ſubmiſſion to the will of a ſuperior. The ſubjection of the Natchez, and of the people of Bogota, ſeems to have been the conſequence of a difference

BOOK IV. a difference in their ſtate from that of the other Americans. They were ſettled nations, reſiding conſtantly in one place. Hunting was not the chief occupation of the former, and the latter ſeem hardly to have truſted to it for any part of their ſubſiſtence. Both had made ſuch progreſs in agriculture and arts, that the idea of property was introduced in ſome degree in the one community, and fully eſtabliſhed in the other. Among people in this ſtate, avarice and ambition have acquired objects, and have begun to exert their power; views of intereſt allure the ſelfiſh; the deſire of pre-eminence excites the enterpriſing; dominion is courted by both; and paſſions unknown to man in his ſavage ſtate prompt the intereſted and ambitious to encroach on the rights of their fellow-citizens. Motives, with which rude nations are equally unacquainted, induce the people to ſubmit tamely to the uſurped authority of their ſuperiors. But even among nations in this ſtate, the ſpirit of ſubjects could not have been rendered ſo obſequious, or the power of rulers ſo unbounded, without the intervention of ſuperſtition. By its fatal influence, the human mind, in every ſtage of its progreſs, is depreſſed, and its native vigour and independence ſubdued. Whoever can acquire the direction of this formidable engine, is ſecure of dominion over his ſpecies. Unfortunately for the people whoſe inſtitutions are the ſubject of inquiry, this power was in the hands of their chiefs. The caziques of the iſles could put what reſponſes they pleaſed into the mouths of their *Cemis* or gods; and it was by their interpoſition, and in their name, that they impoſed any tribute or burden on their people[h]. The great chief of the Natchez was the principal miniſter as well as the repreſentative of the

[h] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 3.

Sun,

Sun, their deity. The reſpect which the people of Bogota paid to their monarchs, was inſpired by religion, and the heir apparent of the kingdom was educated in the innermoſt receſs of their principal temple, under ſuch auſtere diſcipline, and with ſuch peculiar rites, as tended to fill his ſubjects with high ſentiments concerning the ſanctity of his character, and the dignity of his ſtation [i]. Thus ſuperſtition, which, in the rudeſt period of ſociety, is either altogether unknown, or waſtes its force in childiſh unmeaning practices, had acquired ſuch an aſcendant over thoſe people of America, who had made ſome little progreſs towards refinement, that it became the chief inſtrument of bending their minds to an untimely ſervitude, and ſubjected them, in the beginning of their political career, to a deſpotiſm hardly leſs rigorous, than that which awaits nations in the laſt ſtage of their corruption and decline.

Their art of war.

V. AFTER examining the political inſtitutions of the rude nations in America, the next object of attention is their art of war, or their proviſion for public ſecurity and defence. The ſmall tribes diſperſed over America are not only independent and unconnected, but engaged in perpetual hoſtilities with one another [k]. Though ſtrangers to the idea of ſeparate property veſted in any individual, the rudeſt of the American nations are well acquainted with the rights of each community to its own domains. This right they hold to be perfect and excluſive, entitling the poſſeſſor to oppoſe the encroachment of neighbouring tribes. As it is of the utmoſt conſequence to prevent them from deſtroying or diſturbing the game in their hunting grounds, they guard this national property with a jealous at-

[i] Piedrahita, p. 27.
[k] Ribas Hiſt. de los triump. p. 9.

tention,

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tention. But as their territories are extenſive, and the boundaries of them not exactly aſcertained, innumerable ſubjects of diſpute ariſe, which ſeldom terminate without bloodſhed. Even in this ſimple and primitive ſtate of ſociety, intereſt is a ſource of diſcord, and often prompts ſavage tribes to take arms, in order to repel or puniſh ſuch as encroach on the foreſts or plains, to which they truſt for ſubſiſtence.

Their motives for engaging in war.

But intereſt is not either the moſt frequent or the moſt powerful motive of the inceſſant hoſtilities among rude nations. Theſe muſt be imputed to the paſſion of revenge, which rages with ſuch violence in the breaſt of ſavages, that eagerneſs to gratify it may be conſidered as the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of men, in their uncivilized ſtate. Circumſtances of powerful influence, both in the interior government of rude tribes, and in their external operations againſt foreign enemies, concur in cheriſhing and adding ſtrength to a paſſion fatal to the general tranquillity. When the right of redreſſing his own wrongs is left in the hands of every individual, injuries are felt with exquiſite ſenſibility, and vengeance exerciſed with unrelenting rancour. No time can obliterate the memory of an offence, and it is ſeldom that it can be expiated but by the blood of the offender. In carrying on their public wars, ſavage nations are influenced by the ſame ideas, and animated with the ſame ſpirit, as in proſecuting private vengeance. In ſmall communities, every man is touched with the injury or affront offered to the body of which he is a member, as if it were a perſonal attack upon his own honour or ſafety. The deſire of revenge is communicated from breaſt to breaſt, and ſoon kindles into rage. As feeble ſocieties can take the field only in ſmall parties, each warrior is conſcious of the importance of his own arm,

From the ſpirit of vengeance.

arm, and feels that to it is committed a conſiderable portion of the public vegeance. War, which between extenſive kingdoms is carried on with little animoſity, is proſecuted by ſmall tribes with all the rancour of a private quarrel. The reſentment of nations is as implacable as that of individuals. It may be diſſembled or ſuppreſſed, but is never extinquiſhed; and often, when leaſt expected or dreaded, it burſts out with redoubled fury [l]. When poliſhed nations have obtained the glory of victory, or have acquired an addition of territory, they may terminate a war with honour. But ſavages are not ſatisfied until they extirpate the community, which is the object of their rage. They fight not to conquer, but to deſtroy. If they engage in hoſtilities, it is with a reſolution never to ſee the face of the enemy in peace, but to proſecute the quarrel with immortal enmity [m]. The deſire of vengeance is the firſt, and almoſt the only principle, which a ſavage inſtils into the minds of his children [n]. This grows up with him as he advances in life; and as his attention is directed to few objects, it acquires a degree of force unknown among men whoſe paſſions are diſſipated and weakened by the variety of their occupations and purſuits. The deſire of vengeance, which takes poſſeſſion of the heart of ſavages, reſembles the inſtinctive rage of an animal, rather than the paſſion of a man. It turns, with undiſcerning fury, even againſt inanimate objects. If hurt accidentally by a ſtone, they often ſeize it in a tranſport of anger, and endeavour to wreak their

Hence the ferocity of their wars,

[l] Boucher Hiſt. Nat. de N. France, p. 93. Charlev. Hiſt. de N. France, iii. 215. 251. Lery ap De Bry, iii. 204. Creux. Hiſt. Canad. p. 72. Lozano Deſcr. del Gran Chaco, 95. Hennep. Moeurs des Sauv. 40.

[m] Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 251. Colden, i. 108. ii. 126. Barrere, p. 170. 173.

[n] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 326. Lery ap De Bry, iii. 236. Lozano Hiſt. de Parag. i. 144.

vengeance

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vengeance upon it [o]. If ſtruck with an arrow in battle, they will tear it from the wound, break and bite it with their teeth, and daſh it on the ground [p]. With reſpect to their enemies, the rage of vengeance knows no bounds. When under the dominion of this paſſion, man becomes the moſt cruel of all animals. He neither pities, nor forgives, nor ſpares.

THE force of this paſſion is ſo well underſtood by the Americans themſelves, that they always apply to it, in order to excite their people to take arms. If the elders of any tribe attempt to rouze their youth from ſloth, if a chief wiſhes to allure a band of warriors to follow him in invading an enemy's country, the moſt perſuaſive topics of their martial eloquence are drawn from revenge. "The bones of our countrymen," ſay they, "lie uncovered; their bloody bed has not been waſhed clean. Their ſpirits cry againſt us; they muſt be appeaſed. Let us go and devour the people by whom they were ſlain. Sit no longer inactive upon your mats; lift the hatchet, conſole the ſpirits of the dead, and tell them that they ſhall be avenged [q]."

and their perpetuity.

ANIMATED with ſuch exhortations, the youth ſnatch their arms in a tranſport of fury, raiſe the ſong of war, and burn with impatience to embrue their hands in the blood of their enemies. Private chiefs often aſſemble ſmall parties, and invade a hoſtile tribe, without conſulting the rulers of the community. A ſingle warrior, prompted by caprice or revenge, will take the field alone, and march ſeveral hundred miles, to ſurpriſe and cut off a ſtraggling enemy [r]. The exploits of a noted

[o] Lery ap De Bry, iii. 190.

[p] Lery ap De Bry, iii. 208. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. vi. c. 8.

[q] Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 216, 217. Lery ap De Bry, iii. 204.

[r] See NOTE XXXVII.

warrior,

warrior, in ſuch ſolitary excurſions, often form the chief part of the hiſtory of an American campaign [s]; and their elders connive at ſuch irregular ſallies, as they tend to cheriſh a martial ſpirit, and accuſtom their people to enterpriſe and danger [t]. But when a war is national, and undertaken by public authority, the deliberations are formal and ſlow. The elders aſſemble, they deliver their opinions in ſolemn ſpeeches, they weigh with maturity the nature of the enterpriſe, and balance its beneficial or diſadvantageous conſequences with no inconſiderable portion of political diſcernment and ſagacity. Their prieſts and ſoothſayers are conſulted, and ſometimes they aſk the advice even of their women [u]. If the determination be for war, they prepare for it with much ceremony. A leader offers to conduct the expedition, and is accepted. But no man is conſtrained to follow him; the reſolution of the community to commence hoſtilities impoſes no obligation upon any member to take part in the war. Each individual is ſtill maſter of his own conduct, and his engagement in the ſervice is perfectly voluntary [x].

Mode of carrying on war.

THE maxims by which they regulate their military operations, though extremely different from thoſe which take place among more civilized and populous nations, are well ſuited to their own political ſtate, and the nature of the country in which they act. They never take the field in numerous bodies, as it would require a greater effort of foreſight and induſtry, than is uſual among ſavages, to provide for their ſubſiſtence, during a march of ſome hundred miles through dreary foreſts, or dur-

[s] See NOTE XXXVIII.

[t] Boſſu, i. 140. Lery ap De Bry. 215. Hennepin Moeurs des Sauv. 41. Lafitau, ii. 169.

[u] Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 215. 268. Biet, 367. 380.

[x] Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. 217, 218.

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king a long voyage upon their lakes and rivers. Their armies are not encumbered with baggage or military ſtores. Each warrior, beſides his arms, carries a mat and a ſmall bag of pounded maize, and with theſe is completely equipped for any ſervice. While at a diſtance from the enemies frontier, they diſperſe through the woods, and ſupport themſelves with the game which they kill, or the fiſh which they catch. As they approach nearer to the territories of the nation, which they intend to attack, they collect their troops, and advance with greater caution. Even then they proceed wholly by ſtratagem and ambuſcade. They place not their glory in attacking their enemies with open force. To ſurpriſe and deſtroy is the greateſt merit of a commander, and the higheſt pride of his followers. War and hunting are their only occupations, and they conduct both with the ſame ſpirit and the ſame arts. They follow the track of their enemies through the foreſt. They endeavour to diſcover their haunts, they lurk in ſome thicket near to theſe, and with the patience of a ſportſman lying in wait for game, will continue in their ſtation day after day, until they can ruſh upon their prey when moſt ſecure, and leaſt able to reſiſt them. If they meet no ſtraggling party of the enemy, they advance towards their villages, but with ſuch ſolicitude to conceal their approach, that they often creep on their hands and feet through the woods, and paint their ſkins of the ſame colour with the withered leaves, in order to avoid detection [y]. If ſo fortunate as to remain unobſerved, they ſet on fire their huts in the dead of night, and maſſacre the inhabitants, as they fly naked and defenceleſs from the flames. If they hope to effect a retreat without being purſued, they carry off ſome

[y] Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 237, 238. Hennip. Moeurs des Sauv. p. 59.

priſoners,

priſoners, whom they reſerve for a more dreadful fate. But if, notwithſtanding all their addreſs and precautions, they find that their motions are diſcovered, that the enemy has taken the alarm, and is prepared to oppoſe them, they uſually deem it moſt prudent to retire. They regard it as extreme folly to meet an enemy who is on his guard, upon equal terms, or to give battle in an open field. The moſt diſtinguiſhed ſucceſs is a diſgrace to a leader, if purchaſed with any conſiderable loſs of his followers [z]; and they never boaſt of a victory if ſtained with the blood of their own countrymen [a]. To fall in battle, inſtead of being reckoned an honourable death, is a misfortune which ſubjects the memory of a warrior to the imputation of raſhneſs or imprudence [b].

Not owing to any defect of courage.

THIS ſyſtem of war was univerſal in America, and the ſmall uncivilized tribes, diſperſed through all its different regions and climates, diſplay more craft than boldneſs in carrying on their hoſtilities. Struck with this conduct, ſo oppoſite to the ideas and maxims of Europeans, ſeveral authors contend that it flows from a feeble and daſtardly ſpirit peculiar to the Americans, which is incapable of any generous or manly exertion [c]. But when we reflect that many of theſe tribes, on occaſions which call for extraordinary efforts, not only defend themſelves with obſtinate reſolution, but attack their enemies with the moſt daring courage, and that they poſſeſs fortitude of mind ſuperior to the ſenſe of danger or the fear of death, we muſt aſcribe their habitual caution to ſome other cauſe than conſtitu-

[z] See NOTE XXXIX.

[a] Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 238. 307. Biet. 381. Lafitau Moeurs des Sauv. ii. 248.

[b] Charlev. iii. 376. See NOTE XL.

[c] Recherches Philoſ. ſur les Americ. i. 115. Voyage de March. iv. 410.

tional

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tional timidity [d]. The number of men in each tribe is so small, the difficulty of rearing new members, amidst the hardships and dangers of savage life, so great, that the life of a citizen is extremely precious, and the preservation of it becomes a capital object in their policy. Had the point of honour been the same among the feeble American tribes, as among the powerful nations of Europe, had they been taught, in contempt of danger and death, to court fame or victory, they must have been ruined by maxims, so ill adapted to their condition. But wherever their communities are more populous, so that they can act with considerable force, and can sustain the loss of several of their members, without being sensibly weakened, the military operations of the Americans more nearly resemble those of other nations. The Brasilians, as well as the tribes situated upon the banks of the river de la Plata, often take the field in such numerous bodies, as deserve the name of armies [e]. They defy their enemies to the combat, engage in regular battles, and maintain the conflict with that desperate ferocity, which is natural to men, who have no idea of war but that of exterminating their enemies, and who never give or take quarter [f]. In the powerful empires of Mexico and Peru, great armies were assembled, frequent battles were fought, and the theory as well as practice of war were different from what took place in those petty societies which assume the name of nations.

Incapable of order or discipline.

But though vigilance and attention are the qualities chiefly requisite, where the object of war is to deceive and to surprise; and though the Americans, when acting singly, display an amazing degree of

[d] Lafitau Moeurs des Sauv. ii. 248, 249. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 307.

[e] Fabri Veriss. Descrip. Indiæ ap de Bry, vii. p. 42.

[f] See NOTE XLI.

addreſs

addreſs in concealing their own motions, and diſcovering thoſe of an enemy, yet it is remarkable that, when they take the field in parties, they can ſeldom be brought to obſerve the precautions moſt eſſential to their own ſecurity. Such is the difficulty of accuſtoming ſavages to ſubordination, or to act in concert; ſuch is their impatience under reſtraint, and ſuch their caprice and preſumption, that it is rarely they can be brought to conform themſelves to the counſels and directions of their leaders. They never ſtation centinels around the place where they reſt at night, and after marching ſome hundred miles to ſurpriſe an enemy, are often ſurpriſed themſelves, and cut off, while ſunk in as profound ſleep as if they were not within reach of danger [g].

If notwithſtanding this negligence and ſecurity, which often fruſtrate their moſt artful ſchemes, they catch the enemy unprepared, they ruſh upon them with the utmoſt ferocity, and tearing off the ſcalps of all thoſe who fall victims to their rage [h], they carry home thoſe ſtrange trophies in triumph. Theſe they preſerve as monuments, not only of their own proweſs, but of the vengeance which their arm has inflicted upon the people who were objects of public reſentment [i]. They are ſtill more ſolicitous to ſeize priſoners. During their retreat, if they hope to effect it unmoleſted, theſe are commonly exempt from any inſult, and treated with ſome degree of humanity, though guarded with the moſt ſtrict attention.

Treatment of priſoners.

But after this temporary ſuſpenſion, their rage rekindles with new fury. As ſoon as they approach their own frontier, ſome of their number are diſpatched to inform their countrymen with reſpect to

[g] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 236, 237. Lettr. Edif. 17. 308. 20. 130. Lafit. Moeurs, ii. 247. Lahontan, ii. 176.

[h] See NOTE XLII.

[i] Lafitau Moeurs, ii. 256.

the

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the ſucceſs of the expedition. Then the priſoners begin to feel the wretchedneſs of their condition. The women of the village, together with the youth who have not attained to the age of bearing arms, aſſemble, and forming themſelves into two lines, through which the priſoners muſt paſs, beat and bruiſe them with ſticks or ſtones in a cruel manner [k]. After this firſt gratification of their rage againſt their enemies, follow lamentations for the loſs of ſuch of their own countrymen as have fallen in the ſervice, accompanied with words and actions which ſeem to expreſs the utmoſt anguiſh of grief. But, in a moment, upon a ſignal given, their tears ceaſe, they paſs, with a ſudden and unaccountable tranſition, from the depths of ſorrow to tranſports of joy, and begin to celebrate their victory with all the wild exultation of a barbarous triumph [l]. The fate of the priſoners remains ſtill undecided. The old men deliberate concerning it. Some are deſtined to be tortured to death, in order to ſatiate the revenge of the conquerors; ſome to replace the members which the community has loſt in that or former wars. They who are reſerved for this milder fate, are led to the huts of thoſe whoſe friends have been killed. The women meet them at the door, and if they receive them, their ſufferings are at an end. They are adopted into the family, and, according to their phraſe, are ſeated upon the mat of the deceaſed. They aſſume his name, they hold the ſame rank, are treated thenceforward with all the tenderneſs due to a father, a brother, a huſband, or a friend. But if, either from caprice, or an unrelenting deſire of revenge, the women of any family refuſe to accept of the priſoner who is offered to them, his doom is fixed. No power can then ſave him from torture and death.

[k] Lahontan, ii. 184.

[l] Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 241. Lafitau Moeurs, ii. 264.

WHILE

While their lot is in ſuſpenſe, the priſoners themſelves appear altogether unconcerned about what may befall them. They talk, they eat, they ſleep, as if they were perfectly at eaſe, and no danger impending. When the fatal ſentence is intimated to them, they receive it with an unaltered countenance, raiſe their death-ſong, and prepare to ſuffer like men. Their conquerors aſſemble as to a ſolemn feſtival, reſolved to put their courage to the utmoſt proof. A ſcene enſues, the bare deſcription of which is enough to chill the heart with horror, wherever men have been accuſtomed, by milder inſtitutions, to reſpect their ſpecies, and to melt into tenderneſs at the ſight of human ſufferings. The priſoners are tied naked to a ſtake, but ſo as to be at liberty to move around it. All who are preſent, men, women, and children, ruſh upon them like furies. Every ſpecies of torture is applied that the rancour of revenge can invent. Some burn their limbs with red-hot irons, ſome mangle their bodies with knives, others tear their fleſh from their bones, pluck out their nails by the roots, and rend and twiſt their ſinews. They vie with one another in refinements of torture. Nothing ſets bounds to their rage, but the dread of abridging the duration of their vengeance by haſtening the death of the ſufferers; and ſuch is their cruel ingenuity in tormenting, that by avoiding induſtriouſly to hurt any vital part, they often prolong this ſcene of anguiſh for ſeveral days. In ſpite of all that they ſuffer, the victims continue to chant their death-ſong with a firm voice, they boaſt of their own exploits, they inſult their tormentors for their want of ſkill in avenging their friends and relations, they warn them of the vengeance which awaits them, on account of their death, and excite their ferocity by the moſt provoking reproaches and threats. To diſplay undaunted fortitude in ſuch dreadful ſituations

Their indifference concerning their fate, and fortitude under torture.

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is the nobleſt triumph of a warrior. To avoid the trial by a voluntary death, or to ſhrink under it, is deemed infamous and cowardly. If any one betray ſymptoms of timidity, they often diſpatch him at once with contempt, as unworthy of being treated like a man [m]. Animated with thoſe ideas, they endure, without a groan, what it ſeems almoſt impoſſible that human nature ſhould ſuſtain. They appear to be not only inſenſible of pain, but to court it. "Forbear," ſaid an aged chief of the Iroquois, when his inſults had provoked one of his tormentors to wound him with a knife, "forbear theſe ſtabs of your knife, and rather let me die by fire, that thoſe dogs, your allies, from beyond the ſea, may learn by my example to ſuffer like men [n]." This magnanimity, of which there are frequent inſtances among the American warriors, inſtead of exciting admiration, or calling forth ſympathy, exaſperates the fierce ſpirits of their torturers to freſh acts of cruelty [o]. Weary at length of contending with men, whoſe conſtancy of mind they cannot vanquiſh, ſome chief in a rage puts a period to their ſufferings, by diſpatching them with his dagger or club [p].

Sometimes eat their priſoners.

THIS barbarous ſcene is often ſucceeded by one no leſs ſhocking. As it is impoſſible to appeaſe the fell ſpirit of revenge which rages in the heart of a ſavage, this frequently prompts the Americans to devour thoſe unhappy perſons, who have been the victims of their cruelty. In the ancient world, tradition has preſerved the memory of barbarous na-

[m] De la Potherie, ii. 237. iii. 48.

[n] Colden, Hiſt. of Five Nations, i. 200.

[o] Voyages de Lahont. i. 236.

[p] Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 243, &c. 385. Lafitau, Moeurs, ii. 265. Creuxij, Hiſt. Canad. p. 73. Hennep. Moeurs des Sauv. p. 64, &c. Lahont. i. 233, &c. Tertre, ii. 405. De la Potherie, ii. 22, &c.

tions

tions of cannibals, who fed on human fleſh. But in every part of the New World, there were people to whom this cuſtom was familiar. It prevailed in the ſouthern continent [q], in ſeveral of the iſlands [r], and in various diſtricts of North America [s]. Even in thoſe parts, where circumſtances, with which we are unacquainted, had in a great meaſure aboliſhed this practice, it ſeems to have been ſo well known, that it is incorporated into the idiom of their language. Among the Iroquois, the phraſe by which they expreſs their reſolution of making war againſt an enemy is, "Let us go and eat that nation." If they ſolicit the aid of a neighbouring tribe, they invite it to "eat broth made of the fleſh of their enemies [t]." Nor was the practice peculiar to rude unpoliſhed tribes; the principle from which it took riſe, is ſo deeply rooted in the minds of the Americans, that it ſubſiſted in Mexico, one of the civilized empires in the New World, and relics of it may be diſcovered among the more mild inhabitants of Peru. It was not ſcarcity of food, as ſome authors imagine, and the importunate cravings of hunger, that forced the Americans to thoſe horrid repaſts on their fellow-creatures. Human fleſh was never uſed as common food in any country, and the various relations concerning people, who reckoned it among the ſtated means of ſubſiſtence, flow from the credulity and miſtakes of travellers. The rancour of revenge firſt prompted men to this barbarous action [u]. The fierceſt tribes devoured none but pri-

[q] Stadius ap De Bry, iii. 123. Lery, ibid. 210. Biet. 384. Lettr. Edif. 23. 341. Piſo, 8. Condam. 84. 97. Ribas, Hiſt. de los Triumph. 473.

[r] Life of Columb. 529. Mart. Dec. p. 18. Tertre, ii. 405.

[s] Dumont, Mem. i. 254. Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. i. 259. ii. 14. iii. 21. De la Potherie, iii. 50.

[t] Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 208, 209. Lettr. Edif. 23. p. 277. De la Potherie, ii. 298. See NOTE XLIII.

[u] Biet, 383. Blanco, Converſion de Piritu, p. 28. Bancroft, Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, p. 259, &c.

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ſoners taken in war, or ſuch as they regarded as enemies [x]. Women and children who were not the objects of enmity, if not cut off in the fury of their firſt inroad into an hoſtile country, ſeldom ſuffered by the deliberate effects of their revenge [y].

THE people of South America gratify their revenge in a manner ſomewhat different, but with no leſs unrelenting rancour. Their priſoners, after meeting at their firſt entrance, with the ſame rough reception as among the North Americans [z], are not only exempt from injury, but treated with the greateſt kindneſs. They are feaſted and careſſed, and ſome beautiful young women are appointed to attend and ſolace them. It is not eaſy to account for this part of their conduct, unleſs we impute it to a refinement in cruelty. For, while they ſeem ſtudious to attach their priſoners to life, by ſupplying them with every enjoyment that can render it agreeable, their doom is irrevocably fixed. On a day appointed, the victorious tribe aſſembles, the captive is brought forth with great ſolemnity, he views the preparations for the ſacrifice with as much indifference, as if he himſelf were not the victim, and meeting his fate with undaunted firmneſs, is diſpatched with a ſingle blow. The moment he falls, the women ſeize the body, and dreſs it for the feaſt. They beſmear their children with the blood, in order to kindle in their boſoms a hatred of their enemies, which is never extinguiſhed, and all join in feeding upon the fleſh with amazing greedineſs and exultation [a]. To devour the body of a ſlaughtered enemy, they deem the moſt complete and exquiſite gratification of revenge. Wherever this

[x] See NOTE XLIV.

[y] Biet, 382. Bandini, Vita di Americo, 84. Tertre, 405. Fermin, Deſcrip. de Surin. i. 54.

[z] Stadius ap de Bry, iii. p. 40. 123.

[a] Stadius ap de Bry, iii. 128, &c. Lery, ibid. 210.

practice

practice prevails, captives never eſcape death, but they are not tortured with the ſame cruelty as among the tribes which are leſs accuſtomed to ſuch horrid feaſts [b].

As the conſtancy of every American warrior may be put to ſuch ſevere proof, the great object of education and diſcipline in the New World is to form the mind to ſuſtain it. When nations carry on war with open force, defy their enemies to the combat, and vanquiſh them by the ſuperiority of their ſkill or courage, ſoldiers are trained to be active, vigorous, and enterpriſing. But in America, where the genius and maxims of war are extremely different, paſſive fortitude is the quality in higheſt eſtimation. Accordingly, it is early the ſtudy of the Americans to acquire a talent, which will enable them to behave like men, when their reſolution ſhall be put to the proof. As the youth of other nations exerciſe themſelves in feats of activity and force, thoſe of America vie with one another in exhibitions of their patience under ſufferings. They harden their nerves by thoſe voluntary trials, and gradually accuſtom themſelves to endure the ſharpeſt pain, without complaining. A boy and girl will bind their naked arms together, and place a burning coal between them, in order to try who firſt diſcovers ſuch impatience as to ſhake it off [c]. All the trials, cuſtomary in America, when a youth is admitted into the claſs of warriors, or when a warrior is promoted to the dignity of captain or chief, are accommodated to this idea of manlineſs. They are not diſplays of valour, but of patience; they are not exhibitions of their ability to offend, but of their capacity to ſuffer. Among the tribes on the banks of the Orinoco, if a warrior aſpires to the rank of captain,

[b] See NOTE XLV. [c] Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 307.

his

BOOK IV. his probation begins with a long faſt, more rigid than any ever obſerved by the moſt abſtemious hermit. At the cloſe of this, the chiefs aſſemble, each gives him three laſhes with a large whip, applied ſo vigorouſly, that his body is almoſt flayed, and if he betrays the leaſt ſymptom of impatience or even ſenſibility, he is diſgraced for ever, and rejected as unworthy of the honour. After ſome interval, the conſtancy of the candidate is proved by a more excruciating trial. He is laid in a hammoc with his hands bound faſt, an innumerable multitude of venomous ants, whoſe bite occaſions exquiſite pain, and produces a violent inflammation, are thrown upon him. The judges of his merit ſtand around the hammoc, and, while theſe cruel inſects faſten upon the moſt ſenſible parts of his body, a ſigh, a groan, an involuntary motion expreſſive of what he ſuffers, would exclude him from the dignity which he is ambitious to obtain. Even after this evidence of his fortitude, it is not deemed to be completely aſcertained, but muſt ſtand another teſt more dreadful than any he has hitherto undergone. He is again ſuſpended in his hammoc, and covered with leaves of the palmetto. A fire of ſtinking herbs is kindled underneath, ſo as he may feel its heat, and be involved in ſmoke. Though ſcorched and almoſt ſuffocated, he muſt continue to endure with the ſame patient inſenſibility. Many periſh in this rude eſſay of their firmneſs and courage, but ſuch as go through it with applauſe, receive the enſigns of their new dignity with much ſolemnity, and are ever after regarded as leaders of approved reſolution, whoſe behaviour, in the moſt trying ſituations, will do honour to their country [d]. In North America, the previous trial of a

[d] Gumilla, ii. 286, &c. Biet, 376, &c.

warrior

warrior is neither ſo formal, nor ſo ſevere. Though even there, before a youth is permitted to bear arms, his patience and fortitude are proved by blows, by fire, and by inſults, more intolerable to a haughty ſpirit than both [e].

The amazing ſteadineſs, with which the Americans endure the moſt exquiſite torments, has induced ſome authors to ſuppoſe that, from the peculiar feebleneſs of their frame, their ſenſibility is not ſo acute as that of other people; as women, and perſons of a relaxed habit, are obſerved to be leſs affected with pain than robuſt men, whoſe nerves are more firmly braced. But the conſtitution of the Americans is not ſo different, in its texture, from that of the reſt of the human ſpecies, as to account for this diverſity in their behaviour. It flows from a principle of honour, inſtilled early and cultivated with ſuch care, as to inſpire man in his rudeſt ſtate with an heroic magnanimity, to which philoſophy hath endeavoured, in vain, to form him, when more highly improved and poliſhed. This invincible conſtancy he has been taught to conſider as the chief diſtinction of man, and the higheſt attainment of a warrior. The ideas which influence his conduct, and the paſſions which take poſſeſſion of his heart, are few. They operate of courſe with more deciſive effect, than when the mind is crowded with a multiplicity of objects, or diſtracted by the variety of its purſuits; and when every motive that operates with force on the mind of a ſavage, prompts them to ſuffer with dignity, they will bear what might ſeem to be impoſſible for human pa-

[e] Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 219.

tience

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tience to ſuſtain. But wherever the fortitude of the Americans is not rouſed to exertion by their ideas of honour, their feelings of pain are the ſame with thoſe of the reſt of mankind [f]. Nor is that patience under ſufferings for which the Americans have been ſo juſtly celebrated an univerſal attainment. The conſtancy of many of the victims is overcome by the agonies of torture. Their weakneſs and lamentations complete the triumph of their enemies, and reflect diſgrace upon their country [g].

Waſted by their perpetual wars.

THE perpetual hoſtilities carried on among the American tribes are productive of very fatal effects. As their imperfect induſtry does not ſupply them with any ſuperfluous ſtore of proviſions, even in ſeaſons of tranquillity, when the irruption of an enemy deſolates their cultivated lands, or diſturbs them in their hunting excurſions, ſuch a calamity reduces a community, naturally unprovident and deſtitute of reſources, to extreme want. All the people of the diſtrict that is invaded, are frequently forced to take refuge in woods or mountains, which can afford them no ſubſiſtence, and where many of them periſh. Notwithſtanding their exceſſive caution in conducting their military operations, and the ſolicitude of every leader to preſerve the lives of his followers, as they ſeldom enjoy any interval of peace, the loſs of men among the Americans is conſiderable in proportion to the degree of population. Thus famine and the ſword combine in thinning their numbers. All their tribes are feeble, and many which were once powerful have gradually waſted away and at laſt diſappeared. Nothing now

[f] See NOTE XLVI.

[g] Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 248. 385. De la Potherie, iii. 48.

remains

remains of ſeveral nations, which were once conſiderable, but the name [h].

Recruit their numbers by adopting priſoners.

SENSIBLE of this continual decay, there are tribes which endeavour to recruit their national force when exhauſted, by adopting priſoners taken in war, and by this expedient prevent their total extinction. The practice, however, is not univerſally received. Reſentment operates more powerfully among ſavages, than conſiderations of policy. Far the greater part of their captives was anciently ſacrificed to their vengeance, and it is only ſince their numbers began to decline faſt, that they have adopted milder maxims. But ſuch as they do naturalize, renounce for ever their native tribe, and aſſume the manners as well as paſſions of the people by whom they are adopted [i], ſo entirely, that they often join them in their expeditions againſt their own countrymen. Such a ſudden tranſition, and ſo repugnant to one of the moſt powerful inſtincts implanted by nature, would appear ſtrange among any people; but, among the members of ſmall communities, where national enmity is violent and deep rooted, it is more unaccountable. It ſeems, however, to reſult naturally from the principles upon which war is carried on in America. When nations aim at exterminating their enemies, no exchange of priſoners can ever take place. From the moment one is made a priſoner, his country and his friends conſider him as dead [k]. He has incurred indelible diſgrace by ſuffering himſelf to be ſurpriſed or to be taken by an enemy; and were he to return home, after ſuch a ſtain upon his honour, his neareſt re-

[h] Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 202, 203, 429. Gumilla, ii. 227, &c.

[i] Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 245, &c. Lafit. ii. 308.

[k] See NOTE XLVII.

lations

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lations would not receive or even acknowledge that they knew him [l]. Some tribes were ſtill more rigid, and if a priſoner returned, the infamy which he had brought on his country was expiated, by putting him inſtantly to death [m]. As the unfortunate captive is thus an outcaſt from his own country, and the ties which bound him to it are irreparably broken, he feels leſs reluctance in forming a new connection with people, who, as an evidence of their friendly ſentiments, not only deliver him from a cruel death, but offer to admit him to all the rights of a fellow-citizen. The perfect ſimilarity of manners among ſavage nations facilitates and completes the union, and induces a captive to transfer not only his allegiance, but his affection, to the community into the boſom of which he is received.

Their inferiority in war to poliſhed nations.

But though war be the chief occupation of men in their rude ſtate, and to excel in it, their higheſt diſtinction and pride, their inferiority is always manifeſt when they engage in competition with poliſhed nations. Deſtitute of that foreſight which diſcerns and provides for remote events, ſtrangers to the union and mutual confidence requiſite in forming any extenſive plan of operations, and incapable of the ſubordination no leſs requiſite in carrying into execution ſuch plans, ſavage nations may aſtoniſh a diſciplined enemy by their valour, but ſeldom prove formidable to him by their conduct, and whenever the conteſt is of long continuance, muſt yield to ſuperior art [n]. The empires of Peru and Mexico, though their progreſs in civilization, when meaſured by the European or Aſiatic

[l] Lahont. ii. 185, 186.
[m] Herrera dec. 3. lib. iv. c. 16. p. 173.
[n] See NOTE XLVIII.

ſtandards,

ſtandards, was inconſiderable, acquired ſuch an aſcendency over the rude tribes around them, that they ſubjected moſt of them with great facility to their power. When the people of Europe overran the various provinces of America, this ſuperiority was ſtill more conſpicuous. Neither the courage nor number of the natives could repel a handful of invaders. The alienation and enmity, prevalent among barbarians, prevented them from uniting in any common ſcheme of defence, and while each tribe fought ſeparately, all were ſubdued.

Their arts.

VI. THE arts of rude nations unacquainted with the uſe of metals, hardly merit any attention on their own account, but are worthy of ſome notice, as far as they ſerve to diſplay the genius and manners of a people. The firſt diſtreſs a ſavage muſt feel, will ariſe from the manner in which his body is affected, by the heat, or cold, or moiſture, of the climate under which he lives; and his firſt care will be, to provide ſome covering for his own defence. In the warmer and more mild climates of America, none of the rude tribes were clothed. To moſt of them Nature had not even ſuggeſted any idea of impropriety in being altogether uncovered [d]. As under a mild climate there was little need of any defence from the injuries of the air, and their extreme indolence ſhunned every ſpecies of labour to which it was not urged by abſolute neceſſity, all the inhabitants of the iſles, and a conſiderable part of the people on the continent, remained in this ſtate of naked ſimplicity. Others were ſatisfied with ſome ſlight covering, ſuch as decency required. But though naked, they were not unadorned. They dreſſed their hair in many

Dreſs and ornaments.

[d] Lery Navigat. ap. De Bry, iii. p. 164. Life of Columbus, c. 24. Venegas Hiſt. of Californ. p. 70.

different

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different forms. They fastened bits of gold, or shells, or shining stones, in their ears, their noses, and cheeks[e]. They stained their skins with a great variety of figures; and they spent much time, and submitted to great pain, in ornamenting their persons in this fantastic manner. Vanity, however, which finds endless occupation for its ingenuity and invention, in nations where dress has become a complex and intricate art, is circumscribed within so narrow bounds, and confined to so few articles among naked savages, that they are not satisfied with those simple decorations, and have a wonderful propensity to alter the natural form of their bodies. This practice was universal among the rudest of the American tribes. Their operations for that purpose begin as soon as an infant is born. By compressing the bones of the skull, while still soft and flexible, some flatten the crown of their heads; some squeeze them into the shame of a cone; others mould them as much as possible into a square figure[f]; and they often endanger the lives of their posterity by their violent and absurd efforts to derange the plan of Nature, or to improve upon her designs. But in all their attempts either to adorn or to new-model their persons, it seems to have been less the object of the Americans to please, or to appear beautiful, than to give an air of dignity and terror to their aspect. Their attention to dress had more reference to war than to gallantry. The difference in rank and estimation between the two sexes was so great, as extinguished, in some measure, their solicitude to appear mutually amiable. The man deemed it beneath him to adorn his person, for the sake of one on whom he was accustomed

[e] Lery ap. De Bry, iii. 165. Lettr. Edifiantes. 20. 223.

[f] Oviedo Hist. lib. iii. c. 5. Ulloa, i. 329. Voyage de Labat. ii. 72. Charlevoix, iii. 323. Gumilla, i. 197, &c. Acugna Relat. de la Riv. des Amaz. ii. 83. Lawson's Voy. to Carolina, p. 33.

to

to look down as a ſlave. It was when the warrior had in view to enter the council of his nation, or take the field againſt its enemies, that he aſſumed his choiceſt ornaments, and decked his perſon with the niceſt care [g]. The decorations of the women were few and ſimple; whatever was precious or ſplendid was reſerved for the men. In ſeveral tribes the women were obliged to ſpend a conſiderble part of their time every day in adorning and painting their huſbands, and could beſtow little attention upon ornamenting themſelves. Among a race of men ſo haughty as to deſpiſe, or ſo cold as to neglect them, the women naturally became careleſs and ſlovenly, and the love of finery and ſhew, which has been deemed their favourite paſſion, was confined chiefly to the other ſex [h]. To deck his perſon was the diſtinction of a warrior, as well as one of his moſt ſerious occupations [i]. In one part of their dreſs, which, at firſt ſight, appears the moſt ſingular and capricious, the Americans have diſcovered conſiderable ſagacity in providing againſt the chief inconveniencies of their climate, which is often ſultry and moiſt to exceſs. All the different tribes, which remain unclothed, are accuſtomed to anoint and rub their bodies with the greaſe of animals, with viſcous gums, and with oils of different kinds. By this they check that profuſe perſpiration, which, in the torrid zone, waſtes the vigour of the frame, and abridges the period of human life. By this too, they provide a defence againſt the extreme moiſture during the rainy ſeaſon [k]. They likewiſe, at certain ſeaſons, temper paint of different colours with thoſe unctuous ſubſtances, and bedaub themſelves plentifully with that compoſition. Sheathed with this im-

[g] Wafer's Voyage, p. 142. Lery ap. de Bry, iii. 167. Charlev. Hiſt. N. Fran. iii. 216, 222. [h] Charlev. Hiſt. de la Nouv. France, iii. 278, 327. Lafitau, ii. 53. Kalm's Voyage, iii. 273. Lery ap. de Bry, iii. 169, 170. Purch. Pilgr. iv. 1287. Ribas Hiſt. de los triumph. &c. 472. [i] See NOTE XLIX. [k] See NOTE L.

penetrable

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penetrable varniſh, their ſkins are not only protected from the penetrating heat of the ſun, but, as all the innumerable tribes of inſects have an antipathy to the ſmell or taſte of that mixture, they are delivered from their teazing perſecution, which, amidſt foreſts and marſhes, eſpecially in the warmer regions, muſt have been altogether intolerable in their ſtate of nakedneſs [l].

Habitations.

THE next object to dreſs that will engage the attention of a ſavage, is to prepare ſome habitation that may afford him ſhelter by day, and a retreat at night. Whatever is connected with his ideas of perſonal dignity, whatever bears any reference to his military character, the ſavage warrior deems an object of importance. Whatever relates only to peaceable and inactive life, he views with perfect indifference. Hence, though finically attentive to dreſs, he is little ſolicitous about the elegance or diſpoſition of his habitation. Savage nations, far from that ſtate of improvement, in which the mode of living is conſidered as a mark of diſtinction, and unacquainted with thoſe wants, which require a variety of accommodation, regulate the conſtruction of their houſes according to their limited ideas of neceſſity. Some of the American tribes were ſo extremely rude, and had advanced ſo little beyond the primeval ſimplicity of nature, that they had no houſes at all. During the day, they take ſhelter from the ſcorching rays of the ſun under thick trees; at night they form a ſhed with their branches and leaves [m]. In the rainy ſeaſon they retire into covers, formed by the hand of Nature, or hollowed out by their own induſtry [n]. Others, who have no fixed abode, and roam through the foreſts in queſt of

[l] Labat, ii. 73. Gumilla, i. 190, 202. Bancroft Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, 81. 280. [m] See NOTE LI. [n] Lettres Edif. v. 273. Venegas Hiſt. of Califor. i. 76. Lozana Deſcrip. del Gran. Chaco, p. 55. Lettres Edif. ii. 176. Gumilla, i. 383. Bancroft Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, 277.

game,

game, ſojourn in temporary huts, which they erect with little labour, and abandon without any concern. The inhabitants of thoſe vaſt plains, which are deluged by the overflowing of the rivers during the heavy rains that fall periodically between the tropics, raiſe houſes upon piles faſtened in the ground, or place them among the boughs of trees, and are thus ſafe amidſt that wide extended inundation which ſurrounds them [o]. Such were the firſt eſſays of the rudeſt Americans towards providing themſelves with habitations. But even among tribes which were more improved, and whoſe reſidence was become altogether fixed, the ſtructure of their houſes was extremely mean and ſimple. They were wretched huts, ſometimes of an oblong and ſometimes of a circular form, intended merely for ſhelter, with no view to elegance, and little attention to conveniency. The doors were ſo low, that it was neceſſary to bend or to creep on the hands and feet in order to enter them. They were without windows, and had a large hole in the middle of the roof, to convey out the ſmoke. To follow travellers in other minute circumſtances of their deſcription, is not only beneath the dignity of hiſtory, but would be foreign to the object of my reſearches. One circumſtance merits attention, as it is ſingular, and illuſtrates the character of the people. Some of their houſes were ſo large as to contain accommodation for fourſcore or a hundred perſons. Theſe were built for the reception of different families, which dwelt together under the ſame roof [p], and often around a common fire, without ſeparate apartments, or any kind of ſcreen or partition between the ſpaces which they reſpectively occupied. As ſoon as men have acquired diſtinct ideas of property; or when they are ſo much attached to

[o] Gumilla, i. 225. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. ix. c. 6. Oviedo Sommar, p. 53, C.

[p] See NOTE LII.

their

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their females, as to watch them with care and jealouſy; families of courſe divide and ſettle in ſeparate houſes, where they can ſecure and guard whatever they wiſh to preſerve. This ſingular mode of habitation may therefore be conſidered not only as the effect of that community of goods which ſubſiſted among the ſeveral people in America, but as a proof of inattention and indifference towards their women. If they had not been accuſtomed to perfect equality, ſuch an arrangement could not have taken place. If their ſenſibility had been apt to have taken alarm, they would not have truſted the virtue of their women amidſt the temptations and opportunities of ſuch a promiſcuous intercourſe. At the ſame time, the perpetual concord, which reigns in habitations where ſo many families are crowded together, is ſurpriſing, and affords a ſtriking evidence that they muſt be people of either a very gentle, or of a very phlegmatic temper, who, in ſuch a ſituation, are unacquainted with animoſity, brawling, and diſcord[q].

Their arms.

After making ſome proviſion for his dreſs and habitation, a ſavage will perceive the neceſſity of preparing proper arms with which to aſſault or repel an enemy. This, accordingly, has early exerciſed the ingenuity and invention of all rude nations. The firſt offenſive weapons were doubtleſs ſuch as chance preſented, and the firſt efforts of art to improve upon theſe, were extremely awkward and ſimple. Clubs made of ſome heavy wood, ſtakes hardened in the fire, lances whoſe heads were armed with flint or the bones of ſome animal, are weapons known to the rudeſt nations. All theſe, however, were of uſe only in cloſe encounter.

[q] Journ. de Grillet & Becha mel. dans la Goyane, p. 65. Lafitau Moeurs, ii. 4. Torquem. Monarq. i. 247. Journal Hiſt. de Joutel, 217. Lery Hiſt. Braſil, ap. de Bry, iii. 238. Lozano, Deſcr. del Gran Chaco. 67.

But

But men wiſhed to annoy their enemies while at a diſtance, and the bow and arrow is the moſt early invention for this purpoſe. This weapon is in the hands of people, whoſe advances in improvement are extremely inconſiderable, and is familiar to the inhabitants of every quarter of the globe. It is remarkable, however, that ſome tribes in America were ſo deſtitute of art and ingenuity, that they had not attained to the diſcovery of this ſimple invention [o], and ſeem to have been unacquainted with the uſe of any miſſive weapon. The ſling, though in its conſtruction not more complex than the bow, and among many nations of equal antiquity, was little known to the people of North America [p] or the iſlands, but appears to have been uſed by a few tribes in the ſouthern continent [q]. The people in ſome provinces of Chili, and thoſe of Patagonia, towards the ſouthern extremity of America, uſe a weapon peculiar to themſelves. They faſten ſtones about the ſize of a fiſt to each end of a leather thong of eight feet in length, and ſwinging theſe round their heads, throw them with ſuch dexterity that they ſeldom miſs the object at which they aim [r].

Their domeſtic utenſils.

AMONG people who had hardly any occupation but war or hunting, the chief exertions of their invention [s], as well as induſtry, were naturally directed towards theſe objects. With reſpect to every thing elſe, their wants and deſires were ſo limited, that their invention was not upon the ſtretch. As their food and habitations were perfectly ſimple, their domeſtic utenſils were few and rude. Some of the ſouthern tribes had diſcovered the art of

[o] Piedrahita Conq. del Nuevo Reyno, 9. 12.
[p] Naufr. de Alv. Nun Cabeca de vaca, c. x. p. 12.
[q] Piedrah. p. 16. See NOTE LIII.
[r] Ovalle's Relation of Chili. Church. Collect. iii. 82. Falkner's Deſcrip. of Patagon. p. 130.
[s] See NOTE LIV.

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forming veſſels of earthen ware, and baking them in the ſun, ſo as they could endure the fire. In North America, they hollowed a piece of hard wood into the form of a kettle, and filling it with water, brought it to boil by throwing red-hot ſtones into it [t]. Theſe veſſels they uſed in preparing part of their proviſions; and this may be conſidered as a ſtep towards refinement and luxury, for men in their rudeſt ſtate were not acquainted with any method of dreſſing their victuals, but by roaſting them on the fire; and among ſeveral tribes in America, this is the only ſpecies of cookery yet known [u]. But the maſter-piece of art, among the ſavages of America, is the conſtruction of their canoes. An Eſkimaux, ſhut up in his boat of whalebone, covered with the ſkins of ſeals, can brave that ſtormy ocean, on which the barrenneſs of his country compels him to depend for the chief part of his ſubſiſtence [x]. The people of Canada venture upon their rivers and lakes, in boats made of the bark of trees, and ſo light that two men can carry them, wherever ſhallows or cataracts obſtruct the navigation [y]. In theſe frail veſſels they undertake and accompliſh long voyages [z]. The inhabitants of the iſles and of the ſouthern continent form their canoes by hollowing the trunk of a large tree, with infinite labour, and though in appearance extremely aukward and unwieldy, they paddle and ſteer them with ſuch dexterity, that Europeans, well acquainted with all the improvements in the ſcience of navigation, have been aſtoniſhed at the rapidity of their motion, and the quickneſs of their evolutions. Their *pirogues*, or war-boats, are ſo large as to carry

Dreſſing their food.

Conſtruction of their canoes.

[t] Charlev. Hiſt. of N. Fr. iii. 332.
[u] See NOTE LV.
[x] Ellis Voy. 133.
[y] See NOTE LVI.
[z] Lafitau Moeurs, &c. ii. 213.

forty

forty or fifty men; their canoes employed in fiſhing and in ſhort voyages are leſs capacious [b]. The form as well as materials of all theſe various ſpecies of veſſels is well adapted to the ſervice for which they are deſtined; and the more minutely they are examined, the mechaniſm of their ſtructure, as well as neatneſs of their fabric, will appear the more admirable.

Liſtleſſneſs with which they apply to labour.

But, in every attempt towards induſtry among the Americans, one ſtriking quality in their character is conſpicuous. They apply to work without ardour, carry it on with little activity, and, like children, are eaſily diverted from it. Even in operations which ſeem the moſt intereſting, and where the moſt powerful motives urge them to vigorous exertions, they labour with a languid liſtleſſneſs. Their work advances under their hand with ſuch ſlowneſs, that an eye-witneſs compares it to the imperceptible progreſs of vegetation [c]. They will ſpend ſo many years in forming a canoe, that it often begins to rot with age before they finiſh it. They will ſuffer one part of a roof to decay and periſh, before they complete the other [d]. The ſlighteſt manual operation conſumes a vaſt length of time, and what in poliſhed nations would hardly be an effort of induſtry, is among ſavages an arduous undertaking. This ſlowneſs of the Americans in executing works of every kind may be imputed to various cauſes. Among ſavages, who do not depend for ſubſiſtence upon the efforts of regular induſtry, time is of ſo little importance, that they ſet no value upon it; and provided they can finiſh a deſign, they never regard how long they are employed about it. The tools which they employ are

[b] Labat Voyages, ii. 91, &c. 131.
[c] Gumilla, ii. 297.
[d] Borde Relat. des Caraibes, p. 22.

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ſo aukward and defective, that every work in which they engage muſt neceſſarily be tedious. The hand of the moſt induſtrious and ſkilful artiſt, were it furniſhed with no better inſtrument than a ſtone hatchet, a ſhell, or the bone of ſome animal, could hardly perfect the moſt ſimple work. It is by length of labour, that he muſt endeavour to ſupply his defect of power. But, above all, the cold phlegmatic temper peculiar to the Americans renders their operations languid. It is almoſt impoſſible to rouze them from that habitual indolence in which they are ſunk; and unleſs when engaged in war or hunting, they ſeem incapable of exerting any vigorous effort. Their ardour of application is not ſo great as to call forth that inventive ſpirit which ſuggeſts expedients for facilitating and abridging labour. They will return to a taſk day after day, but all their methods of executing it are tedious and operoſe [e]. Even ſince the Europeans have communicated to them the knowledge of their inſtruments, and taught them to imitate their arts, the peculiar genius of the Americans is conſpicuous in all their attempts. They may be patient and aſſiduous in labour, they can copy with a ſervile and minute accuracy, but diſcover little invention, and no talents for diſpatch. In ſpite of inſtruction and example, the ſpirit of the race predominates; their motions are naturally tardy, and it is vain to urge them to quicken their pace. Among the Spaniards in America, *the work of an Indian* is a phraſe by which they deſcribe any thing, in the execution of which an immenſe time has been employed, and much labour waſted [f].

Their religion.

VII. No circumſtance reſpecting rude nations has been the object of greater curioſity than their reli-

[e] See NOTE LVII.

[f] Voyage de Ulloa, i. 335. Lettr. Edif. &c. 15. 348.

gious

gious tenets and rites; and none, perhaps, has been ſo imperfectly underſtood, or repreſented with ſo little fidelity. Prieſts and miſſionaries are the perſons who have had the beſt opportunities of carrying on this inquiry, among the moſt uncivilized of the American tribes. Their minds, engroſſed by the doctrines of their own religion, and habituated to its inſtitutions, are apt to diſcover ſomething that reſembles thoſe objects of their veneration, in the opinions and rites of every people. Whatever they contemplate, they view through one medium, and draw and accommodate it to their own ſyſtem. They ſtudy to reconcile the inſtitutions, which fall under their obſervation, to their own creed, not to explain them according to the rude notions of the people themſelves. They aſcribe to them ideas which they are incapable of forming, and ſuppoſe them to be acquainted with principles and facts, which it is impoſſible that they ſhould know. Hence, even among the moſt barbarous nations in America, ſome miſſionaries have been induced to believe, that they had diſcovered traces, no leſs diſtinct than amazing, of their acquaintance with the ſublime myſteries and peculiar inſtitutions of Chriſtianity. From their own interpretation of certain expreſſions and ceremonies, they concluded that theſe people had ſome knowledge of the doctrine of the Trinity, of the incarnation of the Son of God, of his expiatory ſacrifice, of the virtue of the croſs, and of the efficacy of the ſacraments [g]. In ſuch unintelligent and credulous guides as theſe, we can place little confidence.

Peculiar difficulties in this inquiry.

But, even when we make our choice of conductors with the greateſt care, we muſt not follow them with implicit faith. An inquiry into the religious notions of rude nations is involved in peculiar

[g] Venegas, i. 88. 92. Torquemada, ii. 445. Garcia Origen. 122. Herrera, dec. 4. lib. ix. c. 7. dec. 5. lib. iv. c. 7.

intricacies,

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intricacies, and we muſt often pauſe in order to ſeparate the facts which our informers relate, from the reaſonings with which they are accompanied, or the theories which they build upon them. Several pious writers, more attentive to the importance of the ſubject than to the condition of the people whoſe ſentiments they were endeavouring to diſcover, have beſtowed much unprofitable labour in reſearches of this nature [h].

Confined to two articles.

THERE are two fundamental doctrines, upon which the whole ſyſtem of religion, as far as it can be diſcovered by the light of nature, is eſtabliſhed. The one reſpects the being of a God, the other the immortality of the ſoul. To diſcover the ideas of the uncultivated nations under our review with regard to theſe important points, is not only an object of curioſity, but may afford inſtruction. To theſe two articles I ſhall confine my reſearches, leaving ſubordinate opinions, and the detail of local ſuperſtitions, to more minute inquirers. Whoever has had any opportunity of examining into the religious opinions of perſons in the inferior ranks of life, even in the moſt enlightened and civilized nations, will find that their ſyſtem of belief is derived from inſtruction, not diſcovered by inquiry. That numerous part of the human ſpecies whoſe lot is labour, whoſe principal and almoſt ſole occupation is to ſecure ſubſiſtence, views the arrangement and operations of nature with little reflection, and has neither leiſure nor capacity for entering into that path of refined and intricate ſpeculation which conducts to the knowledge of the principles of natural religion. In the early and moſt rude periods of ſavage life, ſuch diſquiſitions are altogether unknown. When the intellectual powers are juſt beginning to unfold, and their firſt feeble exertions are directed towards a few objects of primary neceſſity and uſe;

The being of God.

[h] See NOTE LVIII.

when

when the faculties of the mind are ſo limited, as not to have formed abſtract or general ideas; when language is ſo barren, as to be deſtitute of names to diſtinguiſh any thing that is not perceived by ſome of the ſenſes; it is prepoſterous to expect that man ſhould be capable of tracing with accuracy the relation between cauſe and effect; or to ſuppoſe that he ſhould riſe from the contemplation of the one to the knowledge of the other, and form juſt conceptions of a Deity, as the Creator and Governor of the univerſe. The idea of creation is ſo familiar, whereever the mind is enlarged by ſcience, and illuminated with revelation, that we ſeldom reflect how profound and abſtruſe this idea is, or conſider what progreſs man muſt have made in obſervation and reſearch, before he could arrive at any knowledge of this elementary principle in religion. Accordingly, ſeveral tribes have been diſcovered in America, which have no idea whatever of a Supreme Being, and no rites of religious worſhip. Inattentive to that magnificent ſpectacle of beauty and order preſented to their view, unaccuſtomed to reflect either upon what they themſelves are, or to inquire who is the author of their exiſtence, men, in their ſavage ſtate, paſs their days, like the animals around them, without knowledge or veneration of any ſuperior power. They have not in their languages any name for the Deity, nor have the moſt accurate obſervers been able to diſcover any practice or inſtitution which ſeemed to imply that they recognized his authority, or were ſolicitous to obtain his favour [i]. It is only among men in the moſt uncultivated

[i] Biet, 539. Lery ap De Bry, iii. 221. Nieuhoff. Church. Coll. ii. 132. Lettr. Edif. 2. 177. Id. 12. 13. Venegas, i. 87. Lozano Deſcript. del Gran Chaco, 59. Fernand. Miſſion. de Chiquit. 39. Gumilla, ii. 156. Rochefort Hiſt. des Antilles, p. 468. Margrave Hiſt. in Append. de Chilienſibus, 286. Ulloa Notic. Americ. 335, &c. Barrere, 218, 219. Harcourt Voy. to Guiana. Purch. Pilgr. iv. p. 1273. Account

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uncultivated ſtate of nature, and while their intellectual faculties are ſo feeble and limited as hardly to elevate them above the irrational creation, that we diſcover this total inſenſibility to the impreſſions of any inviſible power. But the human mind, formed for religion, ſoon opens to the reception of ideas, which are deſtined, when corrected and refined, to be the great ſource of conſolation amidſt the calamities of life. Among ſome of the American tribes, ſtill in the infancy of improvement, we diſcern apprehenſions of ſome inviſible and powerful beings. Theſe apprehenſions are originally indiſtinct and perplexed, and ſeem to be ſuggeſted rather by the dread of impending evils, than to flow from gratitude for bleſſings received. While Nature holds on her courſe with uniform and undiſturbed regularity, men enjoy the benefits reſulting from it, without inquiring concerning its cauſe. But every deviation from this regular courſe rouzes and aſtoniſhes them. When they behold events to which they are not accuſtomed, they ſearch for the reaſons of them with eager curioſity. Their underſtanding is unable to penetrate into theſe; but imagination, a more forward and ardent faculty of the mind, decides without heſitation. It aſcribes the extraordinary occurrences in nature to the influence of inviſible beings, and ſuppoſes that the thunder, the hurricane, and the earthquake, are effects of their interpoſition. Some ſuch confuſed notion of ſpiritual or inviſible power, ſuperintending over thoſe natural calamities which frequently deſolate the earth, and terrify its inhabitants, may be traced among many rude nations [k]. But beſides this, the diſaſters and dangers of ſavage life are ſo many, and men often find themſelves in ſituations ſo formidable, that the mind, ſenſible of its own weakneſs, has no reſource but in the guidance and

count of Braſil, by a Portugueſe. Ibid. p. 1289. Jones's Journal, p. 59. See NOTE LIX.

[k] See NOTE LX.

protection

protection of wiſdom and power ſuperior to what is human. Dejected with calamities which oppreſs him, and expoſed to dangers which he cannot repel, the ſavage no longer relies upon himſelf; he feels his own impotence, and ſees no proſpect of being extricated, but by the interpoſition of ſome inviſible arm. Hence, in all unenlightened nations, the firſt rites or practices which bear any reſemblance to acts of religion, have it for their object to avert evils which men ſuffer or dread. The *Manitous* or *Okkis* of the North-Americans were amulets or charms, which they imagined to be of ſuch virtue, as to preſerve the perſons who repoſed confidence in them from every diſaſtrous event, or they were conſidered as tutelary ſpirits, whoſe aid they might implore in circumſtances of diſtreſs [l]. The *Cemis* of the iſlanders were reputed by them the authors of every calamity that afflicts the human race; they were repreſented under the moſt frightful forms, and religious homage was paid to them with no other view than to appeaſe theſe furious deities [m]. Even among thoſe tribes whoſe religious ſyſtem was more enlarged, and who had formed ſome conception of benevolent beings, delighted with conferring benefits, as well as of malicious powers prone to inflict evil; ſuperſtition ſtill appears as the offſpring of fear, and all its efforts were employed to avert calamities. They were perſuaded that their good deities, prompted by the beneficence of their nature, would beſtow every bleſſing in their power, without ſolicitation or acknowledgment; and their only anxiety was to ſoothe and deprecate the wrath of the powers whom they regarded as the enemies of mankind [n].

[l] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 343, &c. Creuxii Hiſt. Canad. p. 82, &c. [m] Oviedo. lib. iii. c. 1. p. 111. P. Martyr, decad. p. 102, &c. [n] Tertre, ii. 365. Borde, p. 14. State of Virginia, by a Native, book iii. p. 32, 33. Dumont, i. 165. Bancroft Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, 309.

SUCH

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SUCH were the imperfect conceptions of the greater part of the Americans with reſpect to the interpoſitions of inviſible agents, and ſuch, almoſt univerſally, was the mean and illiberal object of their ſuperſtitions. Were we to trace back the ideas of other nations to that rude ſtate in which hiſtory firſt preſents them to our view, we ſhould diſcover a ſurpriſing reſemblance in their tenets and practices; and ſhould be convinced, that, in ſimilar circumſtances, the faculties of the human mind hold nearly the ſame courſe in their progreſs, and arrive at almoſt the ſame concluſions. The impreſſions of fear are conſpicuous in all the ſyſtems of ſuperſtition formed in this ſituation. And the moſt exalted notions of men riſe no higher than to a perplexed apprehenſion of certain beings, whoſe power, though ſupernatural, is limited as well as partial.

Remarkable diverſity in their religious notions.

BUT, among other tribes, which have been longer united, or have made greater progreſs in improvement, we diſcern ſome feeble pointing towards more juſt and adequate conceptions of the power that preſides in nature. They ſeem to perceive that there muſt be ſome univerſal cauſe to whom all things are indebted for their being. If we may judge by ſome of their expreſſions, they appear to acknowledge a divine power as the maker of the world, and the diſpoſer of all events. They denominate him the *Great Spirit* [o]. But theſe ideas are faint and confuſed, and when they attempt to explain them, it is manifeſt, that among them the word *ſpirit* has a meaning very different from that in which we employ it, and that they have no conception of any deity but what is corporeal. They believe their gods to be of the human form, though of a nature more excellent than man, and retail ſuch wild incoherent fables concerning their func-

[o] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 343. Sagard, Voy. du Pays des Hurons, 226.

tions

tions and operations, as are altogether unworthy of a place in hiſtory. Even among theſe tribes, there is no eſtabliſhed form of public worſhip; there are no temples erected in honour of their deities; and no miniſters peculiarly conſecrated to their ſervice. They have the knowledge, however, of ſeveral ſuperſtitious ceremonies and practices handed down to them by tradition, and to theſe they have recourſe with a childiſh credulity, when rouzed by any emergence from their uſual inſenſibility, and excited to acknowledge the power, and to implore the protection of ſuperior beings [p].

Syſtem of the Natchez.

THE tribe of the Natchez, and the people of Bogota had advanced beyond the other uncultivated nations of America in their ideas of religion, as well as in their political inſtitutions; and it is no leſs difficult to explain the cauſe of this diſtinction than of that which we have already conſidered. The Sun was the chief object of religious worſhip among the Natchez. In their temples, which were conſtructed with ſome magnificence, and decorated with various ornaments, according to their mode of architecture, they preſerved a perpetual fire, as the pureſt emblem of their divinity. Miniſters were appointed to watch and feed this ſacred flame. The firſt function of the great chief of the nation, every morning, was an act of obeyſance to the ſun; and feſtivals returned at ſtated ſeaſons which were celebrated by the whole community with ſolemn but unbloody rites [q]. This is the moſt refined ſpecies of ſuperſtition known in

[p] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 345. Colden, i. 17.

[q] Dumont, i. 158, &c. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 417, &c. 429. Lafitau, i. 167.

America,

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America, and, perhaps, one of the moſt natural as well as moſt ſeducing. The ſun is the apparent ſource of the joy, fertility, and life, diffuſed through nature, and while the human mind, in its early eſſays towards inquiry, contemplates and admires his univerſal and animating energy, its admiration is apt to ſtop ſhort at what is viſible, without reaching to the unſeen cauſe; and pays that adoration to the moſt glorious and beneficial work of God, which is due only to him who formed it. As fire is the pureſt and moſt active of the elements, and in ſome of its qualities and effects reſembles the ſun, it was, not improperly, choſen to be the emblem of his powerful operation. The ancient Perſians, a people far ſuperior, in every reſpect, to that rude tribe whoſe rites I am deſcribing, founded their religious ſyſtem on ſimilar principles, and eſtabliſhed a form of public worſhip, leſs groſs and exceptionable than that of any people deſtitute of guidance from revelation. This ſurpriſing co-incidence in ſentiment between two nations, in ſuch different ſtates of improvement, is one of the many ſingular and unaccountable circumſtances which occur in the hiſtory of human affairs.

AMONG the people of Bogota, the ſun and moon were, likewiſe, the chief objects of veneration. Their ſyſtem of religion was more regular and complete, though leſs pure, than that of the Natchez. They had temples, altars, prieſts, ſacrifices, and that long train of ceremonies, which ſuperſtition introduces wherever ſhe has fully eſtabliſhed her dominion over the minds of men. But the rites of their worſhip were cruel and bloody. They offered human victims to their deities, and many of their practices nearly reſembled the barbarous inſtitutions of the Mexicans, the genius of which we ſhall

ſhall have an opportunity of conſidering more attentively in its proper place[r].

Their ideas concerning the immortality of the ſoul,

WITH reſpect to the other great doctrine of religion, concerning the immortality of the ſoul, the ſentiments of the Americans were more united: the human mind, even when leaſt improved and invigorated by culture, ſhrinks from the thoughts of diſſolution, and looks forward with hope and expectation to a ſtate of future exiſtence. This ſentiment, reſulting from a ſecret conſciouſneſs of its own dignity, from an inſtinctive longing after immortality, is univerſal, and may be deemed natural. Upon this, are founded the moſt exalted hopes of man in his higheſt ſtate of improvement; nor has nature with-held from him this ſoothing conſolation, in the moſt early and rude period of his progreſs. We can trace this opinion from one extremity of America to the other. In ſome regions more faint and obſcure, in others more perfectly developed, but no where unknown. The moſt uncivilized of its ſavage tribes do not apprehend death as the extinction of being. All hope for a future and more happy ſtate, where they ſhall be for ever exempt from the calamities which embitter human life in its preſent condition. This they figure as a delightful country, bleſſed with perpetual ſpring, whoſe foreſts abound with game, whoſe rivers ſwarm with fiſh, where famine is never felt, and uninterrupted plenty ſhall be enjoyed without labour or toil. But as men, in forming their firſt imperfect ideas concerning the inviſible world, ſuppoſe that there they ſhall continue to feel the ſame deſires, and to be engaged in the ſame occupations; they naturally aſcribe eminence and diſtinction, in that ſtate, to the ſame qualities and

[r] Piedrahita, Conq. del N. Reyno, p. 17, &c. Herrera, dec. 6. lib. v. c. 6.

talents

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talents which are here the object of their esteem. The Americans, accordingly, allotted the highest place, in their country of spirits, to the skilful hunter, to the adventurous and successful warrior, to such as had surprised and slain the greatest number of enemies, who had tortured many of their captives, and devoured their flesh [s]. These notions were so prevalent, that they gave rise to an universal custom, which is, at once, the strongest evidence that the Americans believe in a future state, and the best illustration of what they expect there. As they imagine, that the dead begin their career anew in the world whither they are gone, that they may not enter upon it defenceless and unprovided, they bury with them their bow, their arrows, and other weapons used in hunting or war; they depositе in their tombs the skins or stuffs of which they make garments, Indian corn, manioc, venison, domestic utensils, and whatever is reckoned among the necessaries in their simple mode of life [t]. In some provinces, upon the decease of a cazique or chief, a certain number of his wives, of his favourites, and of his slaves, were put to death, and interred together with him, that he might appear with the same dignity in his future station, and be waited upon by the same attendants [u]. This persuasion is so deep-rooted, that many of their retainers offer themselves as voluntary vic-

induce them to bury arms, &c. with the dead.

[s] Lery ap De Bry, iii. 222. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 351, &c. De la Potherie, ii. 45, &c. iii. 5. [t] Chronica de Cieca de Leon, c. 28. Sagard, 288. Creux. Hist. Canad. p. 91. Rochefort, Hist. des Antilles, 568. Biet, 391. De la Potherie, ii. 44. iii. 8. Blanco, Convers. de Peritu, p. 35.

[u] Dumont, Louisiane, i. 208, &c. Oviedo, lib. v. c. 3. Gomara, Hist. Gen. c. 28. P. Mart. decad. 304. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 421. Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 3. P. Melchior Hernandez, Memor. de Chiriqui. Coll. Orig. Papers, i. Chron. de Cieca de Leon, c. 33.

tims,

tims, and court the privilege of accompanying their departed maſter, as an high diſtinction. It has been found difficult, on ſome occaſions, to ſet bounds to this enthuſiaſm of affectionate duty, and to reduce the train of a favourite leader to ſuch a number as the tribe could afford to ſpare [x].

Superſtition connected with devotion.

AMONG the Americans, as well as other uncivilized nations, many of the rites and obſervances which bear ſome reſemblance to acts of religion, have no connection with devotion, but proceed from a fond deſire of prying into futurity. The human mind is moſt apt to feel, and to diſcover this vain curioſity, when its own powers are moſt feeble and uninformed. Aſtoniſhed with occurrences, of which it is unable to comprehend the cauſe, it naturally fancies that there is ſome thing myſterious and wonderful in their origin. Alarmed at events, of which it cannot diſcern the iſſue or the conſequences, it has recourſe to other means of diſcovering them, than the exerciſe of its own ſagacity. Wherever ſuperſtition is ſo eſtabliſhed as to form a regular ſyſtem, this deſire of penetrating into the ſecrets of futurity is connected with it. Divination becomes a religious act. Prieſts, as the miniſters of Heaven, pretend to deliver its oracles to men. They are the only ſoothſayers, augurs, and magicians, who poſſeſs the ſacred and important art of diſcloſing what is hid from other eyes.

This department belong to their phyſicians.

BUT, among rude nations, who pay no veneration to any ſuperintending power, and who have no eſtabliſhed rites or miniſters of religion, their curioſity to diſcover what is future and unknown is cheriſhed by a different principle, and derives ſtrength from another alliance. As the diſeaſes of

[x] See NOTE LXI.

men,

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men, in the ſavage ſtate, are like thoſe of the animal creation, few but extremely violent, their impatience under what they ſuffer, and ſolicitude for the recovery of health, ſoon inſpired them with extraordinary reverence for ſuch as pretended to underſtand the nature of their maladies, or to preſerve them from their ſudden and fatal effects. Theſe ignorant pretenders, however, were ſuch utter ſtrangers to the ſtructure of the human frame, as to be equally unacquainted with the cauſes of its diſorders, and the manner in which they will terminate. Enthuſiaſm, mingled frequently with ſome portion of craft, ſupplied what they wanted in ſcience. They imputed the origin of diſeaſes to ſupernatural influence, and preſcribed or performed a variety of myſterious rites, which they gave out to be of power ſufficient to remove them. The credulity and love of the marvellous, natural to uninformed men, favoured the deception, and prepared them to be the dupes of their impoſture. Among ſavages, their firſt phyſicians are a kind of conjurers or wizards, who boaſt that they know what is paſt, and can foretell what is to come. Incantations, ſorcery, and mummeries of diverſe kinds, no leſs ſtrange than frivolous, are the means which they employ to expel the imaginary cauſes of malignity[y]; and, relying upon the efficacy of theſe, they predict with confidence what will be the fate of their deluded patients. Thus ſuperſtition in its earlieſt form flowed from the ſolicitude of man to be delivered from preſent diſtreſs, not from his dread of evils awaiting him in a future life, and was originally ingrafted on medicine, not on religion. One of the firſt, and moſt intelligent hiſtorians of America was ſtruck with this alliance

[y] P. Melch. Hernandez, Memorial de Cheriqui. Collect. Orig. Pap. i.

between

between the art of divination and that of phyſic, among the people of Hiſpaniola [z]. But this was not peculiar to them. The *Alexis*, the *Piayas*, the *Autmoins*, or whatever was the diſtinguiſhing name of their diviners and charmers in other parts of America, were all the phyſicians of their reſpective tribes, in the ſame manner as the *Buhitos* of Hiſpaniola. As their function led them to apply to the human mind when enfeebled by ſickneſs, and as they found it, in that ſeaſon of dejection, prone to be alarmed with imaginary fears, or amuſed with vain hopes, they eaſily induced it to rely with implicit confidence on the virtue of their ſpells, and the certainty of their predictions [a].

Gradually extends.

WHENEVER men acknowledge the reality of ſupernatural power and diſcernment in one inſtance, they have a propenſity to admit it in others. The Americans did not long ſuppoſe the efficacy of conjuration to be confined to one ſubject. They had recourſe to it in every ſituation of danger or diſtreſs. When the events of war were peculiarly diſaſtrous, when they met with unforeſeen diſappointments in hunting, when inundations or drought threatened their crops with deſtruction, they called upon their conjurers to begin their incantations, in order to diſcover the cauſes of thoſe calamities, or to foretell what would be their iſſue [b]. Their confidence in this deluſive art gradually increaſed, and manifeſted itſelf in all the occurrences of life. When involved in any difficulty, or about to enter upon

[z] Oviedo, lib. v. c. i.

[a] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. iii. c. 4. Oſborne, Coll. ii. 860. Dumont, i. 169, &c. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 361. 364, &c. Lawſon, N. Carol. 214. Ribas, Triumph. p. 17. Biet, 386. De la Potherie, ii. 35, &c.

[b] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 3. Dumont, i. 173. Fernand. Relac. de los Chiquit. p. 40. Lozano, 84. Margrave, 279.

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any tranſaction of moment, every individual regularly conſulted the ſorcerer, depended upon his inſtructions to extricate him from the former, and to direct his conduct in the latter. Even among the rudeſt tribes in America, ſuperſtition appears in this form, and divination is an art in high eſteem. Long before man had acquired ſuch knowledge of a Deity as inſpires reverence and leads to adoration, we obſerve him ſtretching out a preſumptuous hand to draw aſide that veil with which Providence kindly conceals its purpoſes from human knowledge; and we find him labouring, with fruitleſs anxiety, to penetrate into the myſteries of the divine adminiſtration. To diſcern, and to worſhip a ſuperintending power, is an evidence of the enlargement and maturity of the human underſtanding; a vain deſire of prying into futurity, is the error of its infancy, and a proof of its weakneſs.

FROM this weakneſs proceeded, likewiſe, the faith of the Americans in dreams, their obſervation of omens, their attention to the chirping of birds and the cries of animals, all which they ſuppoſe to be indications of future events, and if any one of theſe prognoſtics is deemed unfavourable, they inſtantly abandon the purſuit of thoſe meaſures on which they are moſt eagerly bent [c].

Detached cuſtoms.

VIII. BUT if we would form a complete idea of the uncultivated nations of America, we muſt not paſs unobſerved ſome ſingular cuſtoms, which, though univerſal and characteriſtic, could not be reduced, with propriety, to any of the articles into which I have divided my inquiry concerning their manners.

[c] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 262. 353. Stadius, ap de Bry, iii. 120. Creuxij, Hiſt. Canad. 84. Techo, Hiſt. of Parag. Church Coll. vi. 37. De la Potherie, iii. 6.

AMONG

Love of dancing.

Among ſavages, in every part of the globe, the love of dancing is a favourite paſſion. As a great part of their time languiſhes away in liſtleſs indolence, without any occupation to rouze or intereſt them, they delight univerſally in a paſtime which calls forth the active powers of their nature into exerciſe. The Spaniards, when they firſt viſited America, were aſtoniſhed at the fondneſs of the natives for dancing, and beheld with wonder a people, cold and unanimated in moſt of their other purſuits, kindle into life, and exert themſelves with ardour, as often as this favourite amuſement recurred. Among them, indeed, dancing ought not to be denominated an amuſement. It is a ſerious and important occupation, which mingles in every occurrence of public or private life. If any intercourſe be neceſſary between two American tribes, the ambaſſadors of the one approach in a ſolemn dance, and preſent the calumet or emblem of peace; the ſachems of the other receive it with the ſame ceremony [a]. If war is denounced againſt an enemy, it is by a dance, expreſſive of the reſentment which they feel, and of the vengeance which they meditate [b]. If the wrath of their gods is to be appeaſed, or their beneficence to be celebrated; if they rejoice at the birth of a child, or mourn the death of a friend [c], they have dances appropriated to each of theſe ſituations, and ſuited to the different ſentiments with which they are then animated. If a perſon is indiſpoſed, a dance is preſcribed as the moſt effectual means of reſtoring him to health; and if he himſelf cannot endure the fatigue of ſuch an exerciſe, the phyſician or conjurer performs it in

[a] De la Potherie Hiſt. ii. 17, &c. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 211. 297. La Hontan. i. 100. 137. Hennepin. Decou. 149, &c.
[b] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 298. Lafitau, i. 523.
[c] Joutel, 343. Gomara, Hiſt. Gen. c. 196.

BOOK IV. his name, as if the virtue of his activity could be transferred to his patient [d].

All their dances are imitations of ſome action; and though the muſic by which they are regulated, is extremely ſimple and tireſome to the ear by its dull monotony, ſome of their dances appear wonderfully expreſſive and animated. The war-dance is, perhaps, the moſt ſtriking. It is the repreſentation of a complete American campaign. The departure of the warriors from their village, their march into the enemy's country, the caution with which they encamp, the addreſs with which they ſtation ſome of their party in ambuſh, the manner of ſurpriſing the enemy, the noiſe and ferocity of the combat, the ſcalping of thoſe who are ſlain, the ſeizing of priſoners, the triumphant return of the conquerors, and the torture of the victims, are ſucceſſively exhibited. The performers enter with ſuch enthuſiaſtic ardour into their ſeveral parts, their geſtures, their countenance, their voice are ſo wild and ſo well adapted to their various ſituations, that Europeans can hardly believe it to be a mimic ſcene, or view it without emotions of fear and horror [e].

But however expreſſive ſome of the American dances may be, there is one circumſtance in them remarkable, and connected with the character of the race. The ſongs, the dances, the amuſements of other nations, expreſſive of the ſentiments which animate their hearts, are often adapted to diſplay or excite that ſenſibility which mutually attaches the ſexes. Among ſome people, ſuch is the ardour

[d] Denys Hiſt. Nat. 189. Brickell, 372. De la Potherie, ii. 36.

[e] De la Potherie, ii. 116. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 297. Lafitau, i. 523.

of

of this paſſion, that love is almoſt the ſole object of feſtivity and joy; and as rude nations are ſtrangers to delicacy, and unaccuſtomed to diſguiſe any emotion of their minds, their dances are often extremely wanton and indecent. Such is the *Calenda*, of which the natives of Africa are ſo paſſionately fond [e]; and ſuch the feats of the dancing girls, which the Aſiatics contemplate with ſo much avidity of deſire. But, among the Americans, more cold and indifferent to their females, from cauſes which I have already explained, this paſſion mingles but little with their feſtivals and paſtimes. Their ſongs and dances are moſtly ſolemn and martial, they are connected with ſome of the ſerious and important affairs of life [f], and having no relation to love or gallantry, are ſeldom common to the two ſexes, but executed by the men and women apart [g]. If, on ſome occaſions, the women are permitted to join in the feſtival, the character of the entertainment is ſtill the ſame, and no movement or geſture is expreſſive of attachment, or encourages familiarity [h].

Paſſion for gaming.

An immoderate love of play, eſpecially at games of hazard, which ſeems to be natural to all people unaccuſtomed to the occupations of regular induſtry, is likewiſe univerſal among the Americans. The ſame cauſes, which ſo often prompt perſons at their eaſe in civilized life to have recourſe to this

[e] Adanſon, Voy. to Senegal, p. iii. 287. Labat, Voyages, iv. 463. Sloane, Hiſt. Nat. of Jam. Introd. p. 48. Fermin, Deſcript. de Surin. i. p. 139.

[f] Deſcrip. of N. France. Oſborne, Coll. ii. 883. Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 84.

[g] Wafer's Account of Iſthmus, &c. 169. Lery ap de Bry, iii. 177. Lozano, Hiſt. de Parag. i. 149. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. vii. c. 8. dec. 4. lib. x. c. 4. See NOTE LXII.

[h] Barrere, Fr. Equin. p. 191.

paſtime,

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paſtime, render it the delight of the ſavage. The former are independent of labour, the latter do not feel the neceſſity of it, and as both are unemployed, they run with tranſport to whatever is of power to ſtir and agitate their minds. Hence the Americans, who at other times are ſo indifferent, ſo phlegmatic, ſo ſilent, and ſo diſintereſted, as ſoon as they engage in play become rapacious, impatient, noiſy, and almoſt frantic with eagerneſs. Their furs, their domeſtic utenſils, their clothes, their arms, are ſtaked at the gaming-table, and when all is loſt, high as their ſenſe of independence is, in a wild emotion of deſpair or of hope, they will often riſk their perſonal liberty, upon a ſingle caſt [i]. Among ſeveral tribes, ſuch gaming parties frequently recur, and become their moſt acceptable entertainment at every great feſtival. Superſtition, which is apt to take hold of thoſe paſſions which are moſt vigorous, frequently lends its aid to confirm and ſtrengthen this favourite inclination. Their conjurers are accuſtomed to preſcribe a ſolemn match at play, as one of the moſt efficacious methods of appeaſing their gods, or of reſtoring the ſick to health [k].

and for drinking.

FROM cauſes ſimilar to thoſe which render them fond of play, the Americans are extremely addicted to drunkenneſs. It ſeems to have been one of the firſt exertions of human ingenuity to diſcover ſome compoſition of an intoxicating quality; and there is hardly any nation ſo rude, or ſo deſtitute of invention, as not to have ſucceeded in this fatal reſearch. The moſt barbarous of the American tribes have been ſo unfortunate as to attain this art; and

[i] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 261. 318. Lafitau, ii. 338, &c. Ribas, Triumph 13. Brickell, 335.

[k] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 262.

even

even thoſe who are ſo deficient in knowledge, as to be unacquainted with the method of giving an inebriating ſtrength to liquors by fermentation, can accompliſh the ſame end by other means. The people of the iſlands, of North America, and of California, uſed, for this purpoſe, the ſmoke of tobacco, drawn up with a certain inſtrument into the noſtrils, the fumes of which aſcending to the brain, they felt all the tranſports and frenzy of intoxication [m]. In almoſt every other part of the New World, the natives poſſeſſed the art of extracting an intoxicating liquor from maize or the manioc root, the ſame ſubſtances which they convert into bread. The operation by which they effect this, nearly reſembles the common one of brewing, but with this difference, that in place of yeſt, they uſe a nauſeous infuſion of a certain quantity of maize or manioc chewed by their women. The ſaliva excites a vigorous fermentation, and in a few days the liquor becomes fit for drinking. It is not diſagreeable to the taſte, and when ſwallowed in large quantities, is of an intoxicating quality [n]. This is the general beverage of the Americans, which they diſtinguiſh by various names, and for which they feel ſuch a violent and inſatiable deſire, as it is not eaſy either to conceive or deſcribe. Among poliſhed nations, where a ſucceſſion of various functions and amuſements keep the mind in continual occupation, the deſire for ſtrong drink is regulated, in a great meaſure, by the climate, and increaſes or diminiſhes according to the variations of its temperature. In warm regions, the delicate and ſenſible frame of the inhabitants does not require the

[m] Oviedo Hiſt. ap Ramuſ. iii. 113. Venegas, i. 68. Naufrag. de Cabeca de Vaca, cap. 26. See NOTE LXIII.

[n] Stadius ap de Bry, iii. 111. Lery, ibid. 175.

ſtimulation

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ſtimulation of fermented liquors. In colder countries, the conſtitution of the natives, more robuſt and more ſluggiſh, ſtands in need of generous liquors to quicken and animate it. But among ſavages, the deſire of ſomething that is of power to intoxicate, is in every ſituation the ſame. All the people of America, whether natives of the torrid zone, or inhabitants of its more temperate regions, or placed by a harder fate in the ſevere climates towards its northern or ſouthern extremity, appear to be equally under the dominion of this appetite °. Such a ſimilarity of taſte, among people in ſuch different ſituations, muſt be aſcribed to the influence of ſome moral cauſe, and cannot be conſidered as the effect of any phyſical or conſtitutional want. While engaged in war or in the chaſe, the ſavage is often in the moſt intereſting ſituations, and all the powers of his nature are rouzed to the moſt vigorous exertions. But thoſe animating ſcenes are ſucceeded by long intervals of repoſe, during which the warrior meets with nothing that he deems of ſufficient dignity or importance to merit his attention. He languiſhes and mopes in this ſeaſon of indolence. The poſture of his body is an emblem of the ſtate of his mind. In one climate, cowering over the fire in his cabin; in another, ſtretched under the ſhade of ſome tree, he dozes away his time in ſleep, or in an unthinking joyleſs inactivity, not far removed from it. As ſtrong liquors awake him from this torpid ſtate, give a briſker motion to his ſpirits, and enliven him more thoroughly than either dancing or gaming, his love of them is exceſſive. A ſavage, when not engaged in action, is a penſive melancholy animal;

° Gumilla, i. 257. Lozano Deſcrip. de Gran Chaco, 56. 103. Ribas, 8. Ulloa, i. 249. 337. Marchais, iv. 436. Fernandez Miſſion. de las Chiquit. 35. Barrere, p. 203. Blanco Converſ. de Piritu, 31.

but

but as ſoon as he taſtes, or has a proſpect of taſting, the intoxicating draught, he becomes gay and frolicſome [p]. Whatever be the occaſion, or pretext, on which the Americans aſſemble, the meeting always terminates in a debauch. Many of their feſtivals have no other object, and they welcome the return of them with tranſports of joy. As they are not accuſtomed to reſtrain any appetite, they ſet no bounds to this. The riot often continues without intermiſſion ſeveral days; and whatever be the fatal effects of their exceſs, they never ceaſe from drinking as long as one drop of liquor remains. The perſons of greateſt eminence, the moſt diſtinguiſhed warriors, and the chiefs moſt renowned for their wiſdom, have no more command of themſelves than the moſt obſcure member of the community. Their eagerneſs for preſent enjoyment renders them blind to its fatal conſequences; and thoſe very men, who in other ſituations, ſeem to poſſeſs a force of mind more than human, are in this inſtance inferior to children in foreſight, as well as conſideration, and mere ſlaves of brutal appetite [q]. When their paſſions, naturally ſtrong, are heightened and inflamed by drink, they are guilty of the moſt enormous outrages, and the feſtivity ſeldom concludes without deeds of violence, or bloodſhed [r].

But, amidſt this wild debauch, there is one circumſtance remarkable; the women, in moſt of the American tribes, are not permitted to partake of it [s]. Their province is to prepare the liquor, to ſerve it about to the gueſts, and to take care of their huſbands and friends, when their reaſon is

[p] Melendez Teſoros Verdad. iii. 369. Ulloa, i. 338.
[q] Ribas, 9.
[r] Lettr. Edif. ii. 178. Torquemada Mon. Ind. i. 235.
[s] See NOTE LXIV.

overpowered,

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overpowered. This excluſion of the women from an enjoyment ſo highly valued by ſavages, may be juſtly conſidered as a mark of their inferiority, and as an additional evidence of that contempt with which they were treated in the New World. The people of North-America, when firſt diſcovered, were not acquainted with any intoxicating drink; but as the Europeans early found it their intereſt to ſupply them with ſpirituous liquors, drunkenneſs ſoon became as univerſal among them as among their countrymen to the ſouth; and their women having acquired this new taſte, indulge it with as little decency and moderation as the men [t].

Put to death the aged and incurable.

It were endleſs to enumerate all the detached cuſtoms which have excited the wonder of travellers in America; but I cannot omit one ſeemingly as ſingular as any that has been mentioned. When their parents and other relations become old, or labour under any diſtemper which their ſlender knowledge of the healing art cannot remove, they cut ſhort their days with a violent hand, in order to be relieved from the burden of ſupporting and tending them. This practice prevailed among the ruder tribes in every part of the continent, from Hudſon's Bay to the river De la Plata; and however ſhocking it may be to thoſe ſentiments of tenderneſs and attachment, which, in civilized life, we are apt to conſider as congenial with our frame, the condition of man in the ſavage ſtate leads and reconciles him to it. The ſame hardſhips and difficulty of procuring ſubſiſtence, which deter ſavages in ſome caſes, from rearing their children, prompt them to deſtroy the aged and infirm. The declining ſtate of

[t] Hutchinſon, Hiſt. of Maſſachuſ. 469. Lafitau, ii. 125. Sagard, 146.

the

the one is as helpleſs as the infancy of the other. The former are no leſs unable than the latter to perform the functions that belong to a warrior or hunter, or to endure thoſe various diſtreſſes in which ſavages are ſo often involved, by their own want of foreſight and induſtry. Their relations feel this; and incapable of attending to the wants or weakneſſes of others, their impatience under an additional burden prompts them to extinguiſh that life which they find it difficult to ſuſtain. This is not regarded as a deed of cruelty, but as an act of mercy. An American, broken with years and infirmities, conſcious that he can no longer depend on the aid of thoſe around him, places himſelf contentedly in his grave; and it is by the hands of his children or neareſt relations that the thong is pulled, or the blow inflicted, which releaſes him for ever from the ſorrows of life [u].

General eſtimate of their character.

IX. After contemplating the rude American tribes in ſuch various lights, after taking a view of their cuſtoms and manners from ſo many different ſtations, nothing remains but to form a general eſtimate of their character, compared with that of more poliſhed nations. A human being, as he comes originally from the hand of nature, is every where the ſame. At his firſt appearance in the ſtate of infancy, whether it be among the rudeſt ſavages, or in the moſt civilized ſociety, we can diſcern no quality which marks any diſtinction or ſuperiority. The capacity of improvement ſeems to be the ſame; and the talents he may afterwards acquire, as well as the virtues he may be rendered capable of exerciſing, depend entirely upon the ſtate of ſociety in which he is placed. To this ſtate

[u] Caſſan Hiſt. de N. Reyno de Gran. p. 300. Piſo, p. 6. Ellis Voy. 191. Gumilla, i. 333.

his

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his mind naturally accommodates itſelf, and from it receives its diſcipline and culture. In proportion to the wants which it accuſtoms a human being to feel, and the functions in which theſe engage him, his intellectual powers are called forth. According to the connections which it eſtabliſhes between him and the reſt of his ſpecies, the affections of his heart are exerted. It is only by attending to this great principle, that we can diſcover what is the character of man in every different period of his progreſs.

Intellectual powers.

If we apply it to ſavage life, and meaſure the attainments of the human mind in that ſtate by this ſtandard, we ſhall find, according to an obſervation which I have already made, that the intellectual powers of man muſt be extremely limited in their operations. They are confined within the narrow ſphere of what he deems neceſſary for ſupplying his own wants. Whatever has not ſome relation to theſe, neither attracts his attention, nor is the object of his inquiries. But however narrow the bounds may be within which the knowledge of a ſavage is circumſcribed, he poſſeſſes thoroughly that ſmall portion of it which he has attained. It was not communicated to him by formal inſtruction; he does not attend to it as matter of mere ſpeculation and curioſity; it is the reſult of his own obſervation, the fruit of his own experience, and accommodated to his condition and exigencies. While employed in the active occupations of war or hunting, he often finds himſelf in difficult and perilous ſituations, from which the efforts of his own ſagacity muſt extricate him. He is frequently engaged in meaſures where every ſtep depends upon his own ability to decide, where he muſt rely ſolely upon his own penetration to diſcern the dangers to which he is expoſed, and upon his own wiſdom in providing againſt them.

As

Political talents.

As the talents of individuals are exerciſed and improved by ſuch exertions, much political wiſdom is ſaid to be diſplayed in conducting the affairs of their ſmall communities. The council of old men in an American tribe, deliberating upon its intereſts, and determining with reſpect to peace or war, has been compared to the ſenate in more poliſhed republics. The proceedings of the former, we are told, are often no leſs formal and ſagacious than thoſe of the latter. Great political wiſdom is exhibited in pondering the various meaſures propoſed, and in balancing their probable advantages, againſt the evils of which they may be productive. Much addreſs and eloquence are employed by the leaders, who aſpire at acquiring ſuch confidence with their countrymen, as to have an aſcendant in thoſe aſſemblies [x]. But, among ſavage tribes, the field for diſplaying political talents cannot be extenſive. Where the idea of private property is unknown, and no criminal juriſdiction is eſtabliſhed, there is hardly any function of internal government to exerciſe. Where there is no commerce, and ſcarcely any intercourſe among ſeparate tribes; where enmity is implacable, and hoſtilities are carried on almoſt without intermiſſion; there will be few points of public concern to adjuſt with their neighbours; and that department of their affairs which may be denominated foreign, cannot be ſo intricate as to require any refined policy in conducting it. Where individuals are ſo thoughtleſs and improvident as ſeldom to take effectual precautions for ſelf-preſervation, it is vain to expect that public meaſures and deliberations will be regulated by the contemplation of remote events. It is the genius of ſavages to act from the impulſe of preſent paſſion. They have neither foreſight nor temper to form complicated arrange-

[x] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 269, &c.

ments

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ments with reſpect to their future conduct. The conſultations of the Americans, indeed, are ſo frequent, and their negociations are ſo many [y], and ſo long protracted, as to give their proceedings an extraordinary aſpect of wiſdom. But this is not owing ſo much to the depth of their ſchemes, as to the coldneſs and phlegm of their temper, which render them ſlow in determining [z]. If we except the celebrated league, that united the Five Nations in Canada into a federal republic, which ſhall be conſidered in its proper place, we can diſcern few ſuch traces of political wiſdom, among the rude American tribes, as diſcovers any great degree of foreſight or extent of intellectual abilities. Even among them, we ſhall find public meaſures more frequently directed by the impetuous ferocity of their youth, than regulated by the experience and wiſdom of their old men.

Degree of affection.

As the condition of man in the ſavage ſtate is unfavourable to the progreſs of the underſtanding, it has a tendency likewiſe, in ſome reſpects, to check the exerciſe of affection, and to render the heart contracted. The ſtrongeſt feeling in the mind of a ſavage is a ſenſe of his own independence. He has ſacrificed ſo ſmall a portion of his natural liberty by becoming a member of ſociety, that he remains, in a great degree, the ſole maſter of his own actions [a]. He often takes his reſolutions alone, without conſulting, or feeling any connection with the perſons around him. In many of his operations, he ſtands as much detached from the reſt of his ſpecies, as if he had formed no union with them. Conſcious how little he depends upon other men, he is apt to view them with a

[y] See NOTE LXV.
[z] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 271.
[a] Fernandez Miſſion. de los Chiquit. 33.

careleſs

careleſs indifference. Even the force of his mind contributes to encreaſe this unconcern, and as he looks not beyond himſelf in deliberating with reſpect to the part which he ſhould act, his ſolicitude about the conſequences of it ſeldom extends farther. He purſues his own career, and indulges his own fancy, without inquiring or regarding whether what he does be agreeable or offenſive to others, whether they may derive benefit, or receive hurt from it. Hence the ungovernable caprice of ſavages, their impatience under any ſpecies of reſtraint, their inability to ſuppreſs or moderate any inclination, the ſcorn or neglect with which they receive advice, their high eſtimation of themſelves, and their contempt of other men. Among them, the pride of independence produces almoſt the ſame effects with intereſtedneſs in a more advanced ſtate of ſociety, it refers every thing to a man himſelf, and renders the gratification of his own wiſhes, the meaſure and end of conduct. BOOK IV.

Hardneſs of heart.

To the ſame cauſe may be imputed the hardneſs of heart, and inſenſibility, remarkable in all ſavage nations. Their minds, rouzed only by ſtrong emotions, are little ſuſceptible of gentle, delicate, or tender affections [b]. Their union is ſo incomplete, that each individual acts as if he retained all his natural rights entire and undiminiſhed. If a favour is conferred upon him, or a ſervice performed for his behoof, he receives it with much ſatisfaction, becauſe it contributes to his enjoyment; but this ſentiment extends not beyond himſelf, it excites no ſenſe of obligation, he neither feels gratitude, nor thinks of making any return [c]. Even, among perſons the moſt cloſely connected, there is little correſpondence or exchange of thoſe

[b] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 309.
[c] Oviedo Hiſt. lib. xvi. c. 2. See NOTE LXVI.

good

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good offices which ſtrengthen attachment, mollify the heart, and ſweeten the intercourſe of life. Their high ideas of independence nouriſh a ſullen reſerve, which keeps them at a diſtance from each other. The neareſt relations are mutually afraid to make any demand, or to ſolicit any ſervice[d], leſt it ſhould be conſidered by the other as impoſing a burden, or laying a reſtraint upon his will.

Inſenſibility.

I HAVE already remarked the influence of this hard unfeeling temper upon domeſtic life, with reſpect to the connection between huſband and wife, as well as that between parents and children. Its effects are no leſs conſpicuous, in the performance of thoſe mutual offices of tenderneſs which the infirmities of our nature frequently exact. Among ſome tribes, when any of their number are ſeized with a diſtemper, they are generally abandoned by all around them, who, careleſs of their recovery, fly in the utmoſt conſternation from the ſuppoſed danger of infection[e]. But even where they are not thus deſerted, the cold indifference with which they are attended can afford them little conſolation. No look of ſympathy, no ſoothing expreſſions, no officious ſervices contribute to alleviate or to make them forget their ſufferings[f]. Their neareſt relations will often refuſe to ſubmit to the ſmalleſt inconveniency, or to part with the leaſt trifle, however much it may tend to their accommodation or relief[g]. So little is the breaſt of a ſavage ſuſceptible of thoſe ſentiments which prompt men to that feeling attention which mitigates diſtreſs, that, in ſome provinces of America, the Spaniards have found it neceſſary to

[d] De la Potherie, iii. 28. [e] Lettre de P. Cataneo ap Muratori Chriſtian, i. 309. Tertre, ii. 410. Lozano, 100. Herrera, dec. 4. lib. viii. c. 5. dec. 5. lib. iv. c. 2. Falkner's Deſcript. of Patagonia, 98. [f] Gumilla, i. 329. Lozano, 100. [g] Garica Origen, &c. 90. Herrera, dec. 4. lib. viii. c. 5.

inforce

inforce the common duties of humanity by poſitive laws, and to oblige huſbands and wives, parents and children, under ſevere penalties, to take care of each other during their ſickneſs [h]. The ſame harſhneſs of temper is ſtill more conſpicuous in their treatment of the animal creation. Prior to their intercourſe with the people of Europe, the North Americans had ſome tame dogs, which accompanied them in their hunting excurſions, and ſerved them with all the ardour and fidelity peculiar to their ſpecies. But, inſtead of that fond attachment, which the hunter naturally feels towards thoſe uſeful companions of his toils, they requite their ſervices with neglect, ſeldom feed, and never careſs them [i]. In other provinces, the Americans have become acquainted with the domeſtic animals of Europe, and avail themſelves of their ſervice; but it is univerſally obſerved that they always treat them harſhly [k], and never employ any method either for breaking or managing them, but force and cruelty. In every part of the deportment of man in his ſavage ſtate, whether towards his equals of the human ſpecies, or towards the animals below him, we recognize the ſame character, and trace the operations of a mind, intent on its own gratifications, and regulated by its own caprice, without much attention or ſenſibility to the ſentiments and feelings of the beings around him.

Taciturnity.

AFTER explaining how unfavourable the ſavage ſtate is to the cultivation of the underſtanding, and to the improvement of the heart, I ſhould not have thought it neceſſary to mention what may be deemed its leſſer defects, if the character of nations as

[h] Cogulludo Hiſt. de Yucathan. p. 300.
[i] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 119 337.
[k] Ulloa Notic. American. 312.

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well as individuals, were not often more distinctly marked by circumstances apparently trivial, than by those of greater moment. A savage, frequently, placed in situations of danger and distress, depending on himself alone, and wrapt up in his own thoughts and schemes, is a serious melancholy animal. His attention to others is small. The range of his own ideas is narrow. Hence that taciturnity which is so disgusting to men accustomed to the open intercourse of social conversation. When not engaged in action, the Americans often sit whole days in one posture, without opening their lips [l]. When they go forth to war, or to the chace, they usually march in a line at some distance from one another, and without exchanging a word. The same profound silence is observed when they row together in a canoe [m]. It is only when they are animated by intoxicating liquors, or rouzed by the jollity of the festival and dance, that they become gay and conversible.

Cunning.

To the same causes may be imputed the refined cunning with which they form and execute their schemes. Men, who are not habituated to a liberal communication of their own sentiments and wishes, are apt to be so distrustful, as to place little confidence in others, and to have recourse to an insidious craft, in accomplishing their own purposes. In civilized life, those persons, who, by their situation, have but a few objects of pursuit on which their minds incessantly dwell, are most remarkable for low artifice in carrying on their little projects. Among savages, whose views are equally confined, and their attention no less persevering, those circumstances must operate still more powerfully, and gradually accustom them to a disingenuous subtlety

[l] Voyage de Bouguer, 102. [m] Charlev. iii. 340.

in

in all their tranſactions. The force of this is increaſed by habits which they acquire in carrying on the two moſt intereſting operations wherein they are engaged. With them war is a ſyſtem of craft, in which they truſt for ſucceſs to ſtratagem more than to open force, and have their invention continually on the ſtretch to circumvent and ſurpriſe their enemies. As hunters, it is their conſtant object to enſnare, in order that they may deſtroy. Accordingly, art and cunning have been univerſally obſerved as diſtinguiſhing characteriſtics of all ſavages. The people of the rude tribes of America are remarkable for their addreſs and duplicity. Impenetrably ſecret in forming their meaſures, they purſue them with a patient undeviating attention, and there is no refinement of diſſimulation which they cannot employ, in order to inſure their ſucceſs. The natives of Peru were engaged above thirty years, in concerting the plan of their inſurrection, under the vice-royalty of the marquis de Villa-Garcia, and though communicated to a great number of all different ranks, no indication of it ever tranſpired during that long period; no man betrayed his truſt, or by an unguarded look, or raſh word, gave riſe to any ſuſpicion of what was intended [n]. The diſſimulation and craft of individuals is no leſs remarkable than that of nations. When ſet upon deceiving, they wrap themſelves up ſo artificially, that it is impoſſible to penetrate into their intentions, or to detect their deſigns [o].

Virtues.

But if there be defects or vices peculiar to the ſavage ſtate, there are, likewiſe, virtues which it inſpires, and good qualities, to the exerciſe of which

[n] Voyage de Ulloa, ii. 309.
[o] Gumilla, i. 162. Charlev. iii. 169.

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it is friendly. The bonds of ſociety ſit ſo looſe upon the members of the more rude American tribes, that they hardly feel any reſtraint. Hence the ſpirit of independence, which is the pride of a ſavage, and which he conſiders as the unalienable prerogative of man. Incapable of controul, and diſdaining to acknowledge any ſuperior, his mind, though limited in its powers, and erring in many of its purſuits, acquires ſuch elevation by the conſciouſneſs of its own freedom, that he acts on ſome occaſions with aſtoniſhing force, and perſeverance, and dignity.

Independent ſpirit.

Fortitude.

As independence nouriſhes this high ſpirit among ſavages, the perpetual wars in which they are engaged call it forth into action. Such long intervals of tranquillity as are frequent in poliſhed ſocieties, are unknown in the ſavage ſtate. Their enmities, as I have obſerved, are implacable and immortal. The valour of the youth is never allowed to ruſt in inaction. The hatchet is always in their hand, either for attack or defence. Even in their hunting excurſions, they muſt be on their guard againſt ſurpriſe from the hoſtile tribes, by which they are ſurrounded. Accuſtomed to continual alarms, they grow familiar with danger, and courage becomes an habitual virtue, reſulting naturally from their ſituation, and ſtrengthened by conſtant exertions. The mode of diſplaying fortitude may not be the ſame in ſmall and rude communities, as in more powerful and civilized ſtates. Their ſyſtem of war, and ſtandard of valour may be formed upon different principles, but in no ſituation does the human mind riſe more ſuperior to the ſenſe of danger, or the dread of death, than in its moſt ſimple and uncultivated ſtate.

Another virtue remarkable among ſavages, is attachment to the community of which they are members. From the nature of their political union, one might expect this tie to be extremely feeble. But there are circumſtances which render the influence, even of their looſe mode of aſſociation, very powerful. The American tribes are ſmall; combined againſt their neighbours, in proſecution of ancient enmities, or in avenging recent injuries, their intereſts and operations are neither numerous nor complex. Theſe are objects, which the uncultivated underſtanding of a ſavage can comprehend. His heart is capable of forming connections, which are ſo little diffuſed. He aſſents with warmth to public meaſures, dictated by paſſions, ſimilar to thoſe which influence his own conduct. Hence the ardour with which individuals undertake the moſt perilous ſervice, when the community deems it neceſſary. Hence their fierce and deep-rooted antipathy to the public enemies. Hence their zeal for the honour of their tribe, and that love of their country, which prompts them to brave danger that it may triumph, and to endure the moſt exquiſite torments without a groan, that it may not be diſgraced.

Attachment to their community.

Thus, in every ſituation where a human being can be placed, even the moſt unfavourable, there are virtues that peculiarly belong to it; there are affections which it calls forth; there is a ſpecies of happineſs which it yields. Nature, with moſt beneficent intention, conciliates and forms the mind to its condition, the ideas and wiſhes of man extend not beyond that ſtate of ſociety to which he is habituated. What it preſents as objects of contemplation or enjoyment, fill and ſatisfy his mind, and he can hardly conceive any other mode of life to be pleaſant or even tolerable. The Tartar, accuſtomed

Satisfaction with their own condition.

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cuſtomed to roam over extenſive plains, and to ſubſiſt on the product of his herds, imprecates upon his enemy, as the greateſt of all curſes, that he may be condemned to reſide in one place, and to be nouriſhed with the top of a weed. The rude Americans, fond of their own purſuits, and ſatisfied with their own lot, are equally unable to comprehend the intention or utility of the various accommodations, which, in more poliſhed ſociety, are deemed eſſential to the comfort of life. Far from complaining of their own ſituation, or viewing that of men in a more improved ſtate with admiration or envy, they regard themſelves as the ſtandard of excellence, as beings the beſt entitled, as well as the moſt perfectly qualified, to enjoy real happineſs. Unaccuſtomed to any reſtraint upon their will or their actions, they behold with amazement the inequality of rank, and the ſubordination which take place in civilized life, and conſider the voluntary ſubmiſſion of one man to another, as a renunciation, no leſs baſe than unaccountable, of the firſt diſtinction of humanity. Void of foreſight, as well as free from care themſelves, and delighted with that ſtate of indolent ſecurity, they wonder at the anxious precautions, the unceaſing induſtry, and complicated arrangements of Europeans, in guarding againſt diſtant evils, or providing for future wants, and exclaim againſt their prepoſterous folly, in thus multiplying the troubles, and increaſing the labour of life [o]. This preference of their own manners is conſpicuous on every occaſion. Even the names, by which the various nations wiſh to be diſtinguiſhed, are aſſumed from this idea of their own pre-eminence. The appellation which the Iroquois give to themſelves is, *the chief of men* [p]. *Caraibe*, the original name of the fierce inhabitants

[o] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 308. Lahontan, ii. 97.
[p] Colden, i. 3.

of

of the windward iſlands, ſignifies *the warlike people* [q]. The Cherokee, from an idea of their own ſuperiority, call the Europeans *Nothings*, or the *accurſed race*, and aſſume themſelves the name of The beloved people [r]. The ſame principle regulated the notions of the other Americans concerning the Europeans; for although, at firſt, they were filled with aſtoniſhment at their arts, and with dread of their power, they ſoon came to abate their eſtimation of men, whoſe maxims of life were ſo different from their own. Hence they called them the froth of the ſea, men without father or mother. They ſuppoſed, that either they had no country of their own, and therefore invaded that which belonged to others [s]; or, that, being deſtitute of the neceſſaries of life at home, they were obliged to roam over the ocean, in order to rob ſuch as were more amply provided.

MEN, thus ſatisfied with their condition, are far from any inclination to relinquiſh their own habits, or to adopt thoſe of civilized life. The tranſition is too violent to be ſuddenly made. Even where endeavours have been uſed to wean a ſavage from his own cuſtoms, and to render the accommodations of poliſhed ſociety familiar to him; even where he has been allowed to taſte of thoſe pleaſures, and has been honoured with thoſe diſtinctions, which are the chief objects of our deſire, he droops and languiſhes under the reſtraint of laws and forms, he ſeizes the firſt opportunity of breaking looſe from them, and returns with tranſport to the foreſt or the wild, where he can enjoy a careleſs and uncontrouled freedom [t].

[q] Rochefort Hiſt. des Antilles, 455.
[r] Adair, Hiſt. of Amer. Indians, p. 32.
[s] Benzon. Hiſt. Novi Orbis, lib. iii. c. 21.
[t] Charlev. N. Fr. iii. 322.

THUS

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THUS I have finiſhed a laborious delineation of the character and manners of the uncivilized tribes ſcattered over the vaſt continent of America. In this, I aſpire not at rivalling the great maſters who have painted and adorned ſavage life, either in boldneſs of deſign, or in the glow and beauty of their colouring. I am ſatisfied with the more humble merit of having perſiſted with patient induſtry, in viewing my ſubject in many various lights, and in collecting from the moſt accurate obſervers ſuch detached and often minute features, as might enable me to exhibit a portrait that reſembles the original.

General caution with reſpect to this inquiry.

BEFORE I cloſe this part of my work, one obſervation more is neceſſary, in order to juſtify the concluſions which I have formed, or to prevent the miſtakes into which ſuch as examine them may fall. In contemplating the inhabitants of a country ſo widely extended as America, great attention ſhould be paid to the diverſity of climates under which they are placed. The influence of this I have pointed out with reſpect to ſeveral important particulars, which have been the object of reſearch; but even where it has not been mentioned, it ought not to be overlooked. The provinces of America are of ſuch different temperament, that this alone is ſufficient to conſtitute a diſtinction between their inhabitants. In every part of the earth where man exiſts, the power of climate operates, with deciſive influence, upon his condition and character. In thoſe countries which approach near to the extremes of heat or cold, this influence is ſo conſpicuous as to ſtrike every eye. Whether we conſider man merely as an animal, or as a being endowed with rational powers, which fit him for activity and ſpeculation, we ſhall find that he has uniformly attained the greateſt perfection

perfection of which his nature is capable, in the temperate regions of the globe. There his conſtitution is moſt vigorous, his organs moſt acute, and his form moſt beautiful. There, too, he poſſeſſes a ſuperior extent of capacity, greater fertility of imagination, more enterpriſing courage, and a ſenſibility of heart which gives birth to paſſions, not only ardent, but perſevering. In this favourite ſituation he has diſplayed the utmoſt efforts of his genius, in literature, in policy, in commerce, in war, and in all the arts which improve or embelliſh life [u].

THIS powerful operation of climate is felt moſt ſenſibly by rude nations, and produces greater effects than in ſocieties more highly poliſhed. The talents of civilized men are continually exerted in rendering their condition more comfortable; and by their ingenuity and inventions, they can, in a great meaſure, ſupply the defects, and guard againſt the inconveniencies, of any climate. But the improvident ſavage is affected by every circumſtance peculiar to his ſituation. He takes no precaution either to mitigate or to improve it. Like a plant, or an animal, he is formed by the climate under which he is placed, and feels the full force of its influence.

IN ſurveying the rude nations of America, this natural diſtinction between the inhabitants of the temperate and torrid zones is very remarkable. They may, accordingly, be divided into two great claſſes. The one comprehends all the North-Americans, from the river St. Laurence to the Gulf of Mexico, together with the people

[u] Dr. Ferguſon's Eſſay on the Hiſt. of Civil Society, part iii. c. 1.

of

BOOK IV.

of Chili, and a few ſmall tribes towards the extremity of the ſouthern continent. To the other belong all the inhabitants of the iſlands, and thoſe ſettled in the various provinces which extend from the iſthmus of Darien almoſt to the ſouthern confines of Braſil, along the eaſt ſide of the Andes. In the former, the human ſpecies appears manifeſtly to be more perfect. The natives are more robuſt, more active, more intelligent, and more courageous. They poſſeſs, in the moſt eminent degree, that force of mind, and love of independence, which I have pointed out as the chief virtues of man in his ſavage ſtate. They have defended their liberty with perſevering fortitude againſt the Europeans, who ſubdued the other rude Nations of America with the greateſt eaſe. The natives of the temperate zone are the only people in the New World who are indebted for their freedom to their own valour. The North-Americans, though long encompaſſed by three formidable European powers, ſtill retain part of their original poſſeſſions, and continue to exiſt as independent nations. The people of Chili, though early invaded, ſtill maintain a gallant conteſt with the Spaniards, and have ſet bounds to their encroachments; whereas, in the warmer regions, men are more feeble in their frame, leſs vigorous in the efforts of their mind, of a gentle but daſtardly ſpirit, more enſlaved by pleaſure and ſunk in indolence. Accordingly, it is in the torrid zone that the Europeans have moſt completely eſtabliſhed their dominion over America; the moſt fertile and deſirable provinces in it are ſubjected to their yoke; and if ſeveral tribes there ſtill enjoy independence, it is either becauſe they have never been attacked by an enemy already ſatiated with conqueſt, and poſſeſſed of larger territories than he was able to occupy, or becauſe they have

have been ſaved from oppreſſion by their remote and inacceſſible ſituation.

CONSPICUOUS as this diſtinction may appear between the inhabitants of thoſe different regions, it is not, however, univerſal. Moral and political cauſes, as I have formerly obſerved, affect the diſpoſition and character of individuals as well as nations, ſtill more powerfully than the influence of climate. There are, accordingly, ſome tribes, in various parts of the torrid zone, poſſeſſed of courage, high ſpirit, and the love of independence, in a degree hardly inferior to the natives of more temperate climates. We are too little acquainted with the hiſtory of thoſe people, to be able to trace the ſeveral circumſtances in their progreſs and ſituation, to which they are indebted for this remarkable pre-eminence. The fact, nevertheleſs, is certain. As early as the firſt voyage of Columbus, he received information that ſeveral of the iſlands were inhabited by the *Caribbees*, a fierce race of men, nowiſe reſembling their feeble and timid neighbours. In his ſecond expedition to the New World, he found this information to be juſt, and was himſelf a witneſs of their intrepid valour [x]. The ſame character they have maintained invariably in all ſubſequent conteſts with the people of our continent [y]; and, even in our own times, we have ſeen them make a gallant ſtand in defence of the laſt territory which the rapacity of the Europeans had left in their poſſeſſion [z]. Some nations in Braſil were no leſs eminent for vigour of mind, and bravery in war [a]. The people of the iſthmus of Darien boldly met the Spaniards in the field, and frequently repelled

[x] Life of Columbus, c. 47, 48. See NOTE LXVII.
[y] Rochefort Hiſt. des Antilles, 531.
[z] See NOTE LXVIII.
[a] Lery ap de Bry, iii. 207, &c.

thoſe

BOOK IV.

those formidable invaders [b]. Other instances might be produced. It is not by attending to any single cause or principle, however powerful and extensive its influence may appear, that we can explain the actions, or account for the character, of men. Even the law of climate, more universal, perhaps, in its operation than any that affects the human species, cannot be applied, in judging of their conduct, without many exceptions.

[b] Herrera, dec. 1. lib. x. c. 15, &c.; dec. 2. passim.

THE

THE

HISTORY

OF

AMERICA.

BOOK V.

WHEN Grijalva returned to Cuba, he found the armament deſtined to attempt the conqueſt of that rich country which he had diſcovered, almoſt complete. Not only ambition, but avarice, had urged Velaſquez to haſten his preparations; and having ſuch a proſpect of gratifying both, he had advanced conſiderable ſums out of his private fortune towards defraying the expence. At the ſame time, he exerted his influence as governor, in engaging the moſt diſtinguiſhed perſons in the colony to undertake the ſervice [a]. At a time when the ſpirit of the Spaniſh nation was adventurous to exceſs, a number of ſoldiers, eager to embark in any daring enterpriſe, ſoon appeared. But it was not ſo eaſy to find a perſon qualified to take the command in an expedition of ſo much importance; and the character of Velaſquez, who had the right of nomination, greatly increaſed the difficulty of the

1518. Preparations of Velaſquez for invading New Spain.

[a] See NOTE LXIX.

choice.

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choice. Though of moſt aſpiring ambition, and not deſtitute of talents for government, he poſſeſſed neither ſuch courage, nor ſuch vigour and activity of mind, as to undertake in perſon the conduct of the armament which he was preparing. In this embarraſſing ſituation, he formed the chimerical ſcheme not only of atchieving great exploits by a deputy, but of ſecuring to himſelf the glory of conqueſts which were to be made by another. In the execution of this plan, he fondly aimed at reconciling contradictions. He was ſolicitous to chuſe a commander of intrepid reſolution, and of ſuperior abilities, becauſe he knew theſe to be requiſite in order to enſure ſucceſs; but, at the ſame time, from the jealouſy natural to little minds, he wiſhed him to be of a ſpirit ſo tame and obſequious, as to be entirely dependant on his will. But when he came to apply thoſe ideas in forming an opinion concerning the ſeveral officers who occurred to his thoughts as worthy of being entruſted with the command, he ſoon perceived that it was impoſſible to find ſuch incompatible qualities united in one character. Such as were diſtinguiſhed for courage and talents were too high-ſpirited to be paſſive inſtruments in his hand. Thoſe who appeared more gentle and tractable, were deſtitute of capacity, and unequal to the charge. This augmented his perplexity and his fears. He deliberated long, and with much ſolicitude, and was ſtill wavering in his choice, when Amador de Lares, the royal treaſurer in Cuba, and Andres Duero, his own ſecretary, the two perſons in whom he chiefly confided, were encouraged by this irreſolution to propoſe a new candidate, and ſupported their recommendation with ſuch aſſiduity and addreſs, that, no leſs fatally for Velaſquez than happily for their country, it proved ſucceſsful [b].

[b] B. Diaz. c. 19. Gomara Cron. c. 7. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iii. c. 11.

THE

1518. He appoints Cortes commander.

THE man whom they pointed out to him was Fernando Cortes. He was born at Medellin, a ſmall town in Eſtremadura, in the year one thouſand four hundred and eighty-five, and deſcended from a family of noble blood, but of very moderate fortune. Being originally deſtined by his parents to the ſtudy of law, as the moſt likely method of bettering his condition, he was ſent early to the univerſity of Salamanca, where he imbibed ſome tincture of learning. But he was ſoon diſguſted with an academic life, which did not ſuit his ardent and reſtleſs genius, and ritired to Medellin, where he gave himſelf up entirely to active ſports and martial exerciſes. At this period of life, he was ſo impetuous, ſo overbearing, and ſo diſſipated, that his father was glad to comply with his inclination, and ſent him abroad as an adventurer in arms. There were in that age two conſpicuous theatres, on which ſuch of the Spaniſh youth as courted military glory might diſplay their valour; one in Italy, under the command of the Great Captain; the other in the New World. Cortes preferred the former, but was prevented by indiſpoſition from embarking with a reinforcement of troops ſent to Naples. Upon this diſappointment he turned his views towards America, whither he was allured by the proſpect of the advantages which he might derive from the patronage of Ovando [c], the governor of Hiſpaniola, who was his kinſman. When he landed at St. Domingo in one thouſand five hundred and four, his reception was ſuch as equalled his moſt ſanguine hopes, and he was employed by the governor in ſeveral honourable and lucrative ſtations. Theſe, however, did not ſatisfy his ambition; and in the year one thouſand five hundred and eleven, he obtained permiſſion to accompany Diego Velaſquez in his expedition to Cuba. In

[c] See NOTE LXX.

this

BOOK V. this ſervice he diſtinguiſhed himſelf ſo much, that, notwithſtanding ſome violent conteſts with Velaſquez, occaſioned by trivial events, unworthy of remembrance, he was at length taken into favour, and received an ample conceſſion of lands and of Indians, the recompence uſually beſtowed upon adventurers in the New World [d].

THOUGH Cortes had not hitherto acted in high command, he had diſplayed ſuch qualities in ſeveral ſcenes of difficulty and danger, as raiſed univerſal expectation, and turned the eyes of his countrymen towards him, as one capable of performing great things. The turbulence of youth, as ſoon as he found objects and occupations ſuited to the ardour of his mind, gradually ſubſided, and ſettled into a habit of regular indefatigable activity. The impetuoſity of his temper, when he came to act with his equals, inſenſibly abated, by being kept under reſtraint, and mellowed into a cordial ſoldierly frankneſs. Theſe qualities were accompanied with calm prudence in concerting his ſchemes, with perſevering vigour in executing them, and with what is peculiar to ſuperior genius, the art of gaining the confidence and governing the minds of men. To all which were added the inferior accompliſhments that ſtrike the vulgar, and command their reſpect; a graceful perſon, a winning aſpect, extraordinary addreſs in martial exerciſes, and a conſtitution of ſuch vigour as to be capable of enduring any fatigue.

As ſoon as Cortes was mentioned to Velaſquez by his two confidents, he flattered himſelf that he had at length found what he had hitherto ſought in vain, a man with talents for command, but not an object of jealouſy. Neither the rank

[d] Gomara Cron. c. 1, 2, 3.

nor

nor the fortune of Cortes, as he imagined, were ſuch that he could aſpire at independence. He had reaſon to believe, that by his own readineſs to bury ancient animoſities in oblivion, as well as his liberality in conferring ſeveral recent favours, he had already gained the good-will of Cortes, and hoped, by this new and unexpected mark of confidence, that he might attach him for ever to his intereſt.

Soon becomes jealous of him. October 23.

CORTES receiving his commiſſion with the warmeſt expreſſions of reſpect and gratitude to the governor, immediately erected his ſtandard before his own houſe, appeared in a military dreſs, and aſſumed all the enſigns of his new dignity. His utmoſt influence and activity were exerted in perſuading many of his friends to engage in the ſervice, and in urging forward the preparations for the voyage. All his own funds, together with what money he could raiſe by mortgaging his lands and Indians, were expended in purchaſing military ſtores and proviſions, or in ſupplying the wants of ſuch of his officers as were unable to equip themſelves in a manner ſuited to their rank [e]. Inoffenſive, and even laudable as this conduct was, his diſappointed competitors were malicious enough to give it a turn to his diſadvantage: They repreſented him as aiming already, with little diſguiſe, at eſtabliſhing an independent authority over his troops, and endeavouring to ſecure their reſpect or love by his oſtentatious and intereſted liberality. They reminded Velaſquez of his former diſſentions with the man in whom he now repoſed ſo much confidence, and foretold that Cortes would be more apt to avail himſelf of the power, which he was

[e] See NOTE LXXI.

BOOK V. 1518.

inconſiderately putting in his hands, to avenge paſt injuries, than to requite late obligations. Theſe inſinuations made ſuch impreſſion upon the ſuſpicious mind of Velaſquez, that Cortes ſoon obſerved ſome ſymptoms of a growing alienation and diſtruſt in his behaviour, and was adviſed by his friends, Lares and Duero, to haſten his departure, before theſe ſhould become ſo confirmed, as to break out with open violence. Fully ſenſible of this danger, he urged forward his preparations with ſuch rapidity, that he ſet ſail from St. Jago de Cuba on the eighteenth of November, Velaſquez accompanying him to the ſhore, and taking leave of him with an appearance of perfect friendſhip and confidence, though he had ſecretly given it in charge to ſome of his officers, to keep a watchful eye upon every part of their commander's conduct [f].

Endeavours to deprive him of his commiſſion,

CORTES proceeded to Trinidad, a ſmall ſettlement on the ſame ſide of the iſland, where he was joined by ſeveral adventurers, and received a ſupply of proviſions and military ſtores, of which his ſtock was ſtill very incomplete. He had hardly left St. Jago when the jealouſy which had been working in the breaſt of Velaſquez, grew ſo violent that it was impoſſible to ſuppreſs it. The armament was no longer under his own eye and direction; and he felt that as his power over it ceaſed, that of Cortes became more abſolute. Imagination now aggravated every circumſtance, which had formerly excited ſuſpicion: the rivals of Cortes induſtriouſly threw in reflections which increaſed his fears; and with no leſs art than malice they called ſuperſtition to their aid, employing the predictions of an aſtrologer in order to complete the alarm. All theſe, by their united operation, pro-

[f] Gomara Cron. c. 7. B. Diaz. c. 20.

duced

duced the desired effect. Velasquez repented bitterly of his own imprudence, in having committed a trust of so much importance to a person whose fidelity appeared so doubtful, and hastily dispatched instructions to Trinidad, empowering Verdugo, the chief magistrate there, to deprive Cortes of his commission. But Cortes had already made such progress in gaining the esteem and confidence of his troops, that, finding officers as well as soldiers equally zealous to support his authority, he soothed or intimidated Verdugo, and was permitted to depart from Trinidad without molestation. 1518.

and to lay him under arrest.

From Trinidad Cortes sailed for Havana, in order to raise more soldiers, and to complete the victualling of his fleet. There several persons of distinction entered into the service, and engaged to supply what provisions were still wanting; but as it was necessary to allow them some time for performing what they had promised, Velasquez, sensible that he ought no longer to rely on a man of whom he had so openly discovered his distrust, availed himself of the interval, which this unavoidable delay afforded, in order to make one attempt more to wrest the command out of the hands of Cortes. He loudly complained of Verdugo's conduct, accusing him either of childish facility, or of manifest treachery, in suffering Cortes to escape from Trinidad. Anxious to guard against a second disappointment, he sent a person of confidence to the Havana, with peremptory injunctions to Pedro Barba, his lieutenant-governor in that colony, instantly to arrest Cortes, to send him prisoner to St. Jago under a strong guard, and to countermand the departure of the armament until he should receive farther orders: He wrote likewise to the principal officers, requiring them

BOOK V. 1518.

to aſſiſt Barba in executing what he had given him in charge. But before the arrival of his meſſenger, a Franciſcan friar of St. Jago had ſecretly conveyed an account of this intereſting tranſaction to Bartholomew de Olmedo, a monk of the ſame order, who acted as chaplain to the expedition.

Cortes defeats his ſchemes, and continues his preparations.

CORTES, forewarned of the danger, had time to take precautions for his own ſafety. His firſt ſtep was to find ſome pretext for removing from Havana Diego de Ordaz, an officer of great merit, but in whom, on account of his known attachment to Velaſquez, he could not confide in this trying and delicate juncture. He gave him the command of a veſſel, deſtined to take on board ſome proviſions in a ſmall harbour beyond Cape Antonio, and thus made ſure of his abſence, without ſeeming to ſuſpect his fidelity. When he was gone, Cortes no longer concealed the intentions of Velaſquez from his troops; and as officers and ſoldiers were equally impatient to ſet out on an expedition, in preparing for which moſt of them had expended all their fortune, they expreſſed their aſtoniſhment and indignation at that illiberal jealouſy, to which the governor was about to ſacrifice, not only the honour of their general, but all their ſanguine hopes of glory and wealth. With one voice they intreated that he would not abandon the important ſtation to which he had ſuch a good title. They conjured him not to deprive them of a leader whom they followed with ſuch well-founded confidence, and offered to ſhed the laſt drop of their blood in maintaining his authority. Cortes was eaſily induced to comply with what he ſo ardently deſired. He ſwore that he would never deſert ſoldiers who had given him ſuch a ſignal proof of their attachment, and promiſed inſtantly

ſtantly to conduct them to that rich country, which had been ſo long the object of their thoughts and wiſhes. This declaration was received with tranſports of military applauſe, accompanied with threats and imprecations againſt all who ſhould preſume to call in queſtion the juriſdiction of their general, or to obſtruct the execution of his deſigns. BOOK V. 1518.

EVERY thing was now ready for their departure: but though this expedition was the united effort of the Spaniſh power in Cuba; though every ſettlement had contributed its quota of men and proviſions; though the governor had laid out conſiderable ſums, and each adventurer had exhauſted his ſtock, or ſtrained his credit, the poverty of the preparations was ſuch as muſt aſtoniſh the preſent age, and bore, indeed, no reſemblance to an armament deſtined for the conqueſt of a great empire. The fleet conſiſted of eleven veſſels; the largeſt of a hundred tons, which was dignified with the name of Admiral; three of ſeventy or eighty tons, and the reſt ſmall open barks. On board of theſe were ſix hundred and ſeventeen men; of which five hundred and eight belonged to the land ſervice, and a hundred and nine were ſeamen or artificers. The ſoldiers were divided into eleven companies, according to the number of the ſhips; to each of which Cortes appointed a captain, and committed to him the command of the veſſel while at ſea, and of the men when on ſhore[g]. As the uſe of fire arms among the nations of Europe was hitherto confined to a few battalions of regularly diſciplined infantry, only thirteen ſoldiers were armed with muſkets, thirty-two were croſs-bow-men, and the The amount of his forces.

[g] See NOTE LXXII.

reſt

BOOK V. 1518.

reſt had ſwords and ſpears. Inſtead of the uſual defenſive armour, which muſt have been cumberſome in a hot climate, they wore jackets, quilted with cotton, which experience had taught the Spaniards to be a ſufficient protection againſt the weapons of the Americans. They had only ſixteen horſes, ten ſmall field pieces, and four falconets [h].

1519. Feb. 10. His departure from Cuba.

WITH this ſlender and ill-provided train did Cortes ſet ſail, to make war upon a monarch whoſe dominions were more extenſive than all the kingdoms ſubject to the Spaniſh crown. As religious enthuſiaſm always mingled with the ſpirit of adventure in the New World, and, by a combination ſtill more ſtrange, united with avarice, in prompting the Spaniards to all their enterpriſes, a large croſs was diſplayed in their ſtandards, with this inſcription, *Let us follow the croſs, for under this ſign we ſhall conquer.*

So powerfully were Cortes and his followers animated with both theſe paſſions, that, no leſs eager to plunder the opulent country whither they were bound, than zealous to propagate the Chriſtian faith among its inhabitants, they ſet out, not with the ſolicitude natural to men going upon dangerous ſervice, but with that confidence which ariſes from ſecurity of ſucceſs, and certainty of the divine protection.

Touches at Cozumel;

As Cortes had determined to touch at every place which Grijalva had viſited, he ſteered directly towards the iſland of Cozumel; there he had the good fortune to redeem Jerome de Aguilar, a Spaniard, who had been eight years a priſoner among the Indians. This man was perfectly acquainted with a dialect of their language, under-

[h] B. Diaz. c. 19.

ſtood

ſtood through a large extent of country, and poſſeſſing beſides a conſiderable ſhare of prudence and ſagacity, proved extremely uſeful as an interpreter. From Cozumel, Cortes proceeded to the river of Tabaſco, in hopes of a reception as friendly as Grijalva had met with there, and of finding gold in the ſame abundance; but the diſpoſition of the natives, from ſome unknown cauſe, was totally changed. After repeated endeavours to conciliate their good will, he was conſtrained to have recourſe to violence. Though the forces of the enemy were numerous, and advanced with extraordinary courage, they were routed, with great ſlaughter, in ſeveral ſucceſſive actions. The loſs which they ſuſtained, and ſtill more the aſtoniſhment and terror excited by the deſtructive effect of the fire-arms, and the dreadful appearance of the horſes, humbled their fierce ſpirits, and induced them to ſue for peace. They acknowledged the king of Caſtile as their ſovereign, and granted Cortes a ſupply of proviſions, with a preſent of cotton garments, ſome gold, and twenty female ſlaves [i].

1519. March 4. and at Tabaſco.

Cortes continued his courſe to the weſtward, keeping as near the ſhore as poſſible, in order to obſerve the country; but could diſcover no proper place for landing, until he arrived at St. Juan de Ulua [k]. As he entered this harbour, a large canoe, full of people, among whom were two who ſeemed to be perſons of diſtinction, approached his ſhip, with ſigns of peace and amity. They came on board without fear or diſtruſt, and addreſſed him in a moſt reſpectful manner, but in a language altogether unknown to Aguilar. Cortes was in the

Arrives at St. Juan de Ulua.

April. 2.

[i] See NOTE LXXIII.

[k] B. Diaz. c. 31—36. Gomara Cron. c. 18—23. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iv. c. 11, &c.

utmoſt

BOOK V. 1519.

utmoſt perplexity and diſtreſs, at an event of which he inſtantly foreſaw all the conſequences, and already felt the heſitation and uncertainty with which he ſhould carry on the great ſchemes which he meditated, if, in his tranſactions with the natives, he muſt depend entirely upon ſuch an imperfect, ambiguous, and conjectural mode of communication, as the uſe of ſigns. But he did not remain long in this embarraſſing ſituation: a fortunate accident extricated him, when his own ſagacity could have contributed little towards his relief. One of the female ſlaves, whom he had received from the cazique of Tabaſco, happened to be preſent at the firſt interview between Cortes and his new gueſts. She perceived his diſtreſs, as well as the confuſion of Aguilar; and as ſhe perfectly underſtood the Mexican language, ſhe explained what they ſaid in the Yucatan tongue, with which Aguilar was acquainted. This woman, known afterwards by the name of Donna Marina, and who makes a conſpicuous figure in the hiſtory of the New World, where great revolutions were brought about by ſmall cauſes and inconſiderable inſtruments, was born in one of the provinces of the Mexican empire. Having been carried off a captive by ſome hoſtile party, after a variety of adventures ſhe fell into the hands of the Tabaſcans, and had reſided long enough among them to acquire their language, without loſing the uſe of her own. Though it was both tedious and troubleſome to converſe by the intervention of two different interpreters, Cortes was ſo highly pleaſed with having diſcovered this method of carrying on ſome intercourſe with the people of a country into which he was determined to penetrate, that in the tranſports of his joy he conſidered it as a viſible interpoſition of Providence in his favour [1].

[1] B. Diaz. c. 37, 38, 39. Gomara Cron. c. 25, 26. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. v. c. 4.

He

HE now learned, that the two perſons whom he had received on board of his ſhip were deputies from Pilpatoe and Teutile; the one governor of that province under a great monarch, whom they called Montezuma, and the other the commander of his forces there, and that they were ſent to inquire what his intentions were in viſiting their coaſt, and to offer him what aſſiſtance he might need, in order to continue his voyage. Cortes, ſtruck with the appearance of thoſe people, as well as the tenor of the meſſage, aſſured them, in reſpectful terms, that he approached their country with moſt friendly ſentiments, and came to propoſe matters of great importance to the welfare of their prince and his kingdom, which he would unfold more fully, in perſon, to the governor and the general. Next morning, without waiting for any anſwer, he landed his troops, his horſes and artillery; and having choſen proper ground, began to erect huts for his men, and to fortify his camp. The natives, inſtead of oppoſing the entrance of thoſe fatal gueſts into their country, aſſiſted them in all their operations, with an alacrity of which they had ere long good reaſon to repent.

1519. Lands his troops.

NEXT day, Pilpatoe and Teutile entered the Spaniſh camp with a numerous retinue, and Cortes conſidering them as the miniſters of a great monarch, entitled to a degree of attention very different from that which the Spaniards were accuſtomed to pay to the petty Caziques, with whom they had intercourſe, received them with much formal ceremony. He informed them, that he came as ambaſſador from Don Carlos of Auſtria, king of Caſtile, the greateſt monarch of the eaſt, and was intruſted with propoſitions of ſuch moment, that he could impart them to none but the emperor

His firſt interview with the Mexicans.

BOOK V. 1519.

emperor Montezuma himſelf, and therefore required them to conduct him, without loſs of time, into the preſence of their maſter. The Mexican officers could not conceal their uneaſineſs at a requeſt, which they knew to be diſagreeable, and which they foreſaw might prove extremely embarraſſing to their ſovereign, whoſe mind had been filled with many diſquieting apprehenſions, ever ſince the former appearance of the Spaniards on his coaſts. But before they attempted to diſſuade Cortes from inſiſting on this demand, they endeavoured to conciliate his good-will, by entreating him to accept of certain preſents, which, as humble ſlaves of Montezuma, they laid at his feet. Theſe were introduced with great parade, and conſiſted of fine cotton cloth, of plumes of various colours, and of ornaments of gold and ſilver, to a conſiderable value; the workmanſhip of which appeared to be as curious as the materials were rich. The diſplay of theſe produced an effect very different from what the Mexicans intended. Inſtead of ſatisfying, it increaſed the avidity of the Spaniards, and rendered them ſo eager and impatient to become maſters of a country which abounded with ſuch precious productions, that Cortes could hardly liſten with patience to the arguments which Pilpatoe and Teutile employed to diſſuade him from viſiting the capital, and in a haughty determined tone he inſiſted on his demand, of being admitted to a perſonal audience of their ſovereign. During this interview, ſome painters, in the train of the Mexican chiefs, had been diligently employed in delineating upon white cotton cloth, figures of the ſhips, the horſes, the artillery, the ſoldiers, and whatever elſe attracted their eyes, as ſingular. When Cortes obſerved this, and was informed that theſe pictures were to be ſent to Montezuma, in order to convey to him a more live idea of the ſtrange and wonderful objects now preſented to their view, than any words could

could communicate, he reſolved to render the repreſentation ſtill more animated and intereſting, by exhibiting ſuch a ſpectacle as might give both them and their monarch an awful impreſſion of the extraordinary proweſs of his followers, and the irreſiſtible force of their arms. The trumpets, by his order, ſounded an alarm; the troops, in a moment, formed in order of battle, the infantry performed ſuch martial exerciſes as were beſt ſuited to diſplay the effect of their different weapons; the horſe, in various evolutions, gave a ſpecimen of their agility and ſtrength; the artillery pointed towards the thick woods which ſurrounded the camp, made dreadful havoc among the trees. The Mexicans looked on with that ſilent amazement, which is natural when the mind is ſtruck with objects, which are both awful and above its comprehenſion. But, at the exploſion of the cannon, many of them fled, ſome fell to the ground, and all were ſo much confounded at the ſight of men whoſe power ſo nearly reſembled that of the Gods, that Cortes found it difficult to compoſe and re-aſſure them. The painters had now many new ſubjects on which to exerciſe their art, and they put their fancy on the ſtretch in order to invent figures and characters to repreſent the extraordinary things which they had ſeen.

1519.

Negociations with Montezuma.

MESSENGERS were immediately diſpatched to Montezuma with thoſe pictures, and a full account of every thing that had paſſed ſince the arrival of the Spaniards, and by them Cortes ſent a preſent of ſome European curioſities to Montezuma, which, though of no great value, he believed would be acceptable on account of their novelty. The Mexican monarchs, in order to obtain early information of every occurrence in all the corners of their vaſt empire, had introduced a refinement in police,

BOOK V. 1519.

police, unknown, at that time, in Europe. They had couriers poſted at proper ſtations along the principal roads, and as theſe were trained to agility by a regular education, and relieved one another at moderate diſtances, they conveyed intelligence with ſurpriſing rapidity. Though the capital in which Montezuma reſided was above a hundred and eighty miles from St. Juan de Ulua, Cortes's preſents were carried thither, and an anſwer to his demands was received in a few days. The ſame officers who had hitherto treated with the Spaniards, were employed to deliver this anſwer; but as they knew how repugnant the determination of their maſter was to all the ſchemes and wiſhes of the Spaniſh commander, they would not venture to make it known until they had previouſly endeavoured to ſoothe and mollify him. For this purpoſe, they renewed the negociation by introducing a train of a hundred Indians, loaded with preſents ſent to him by Montezuma. The magnificence of theſe was ſuch as became a great monarch, and far exceeded any idea which the Spaniards had hitherto formed of his wealth. They were placed upon mats ſpread on the ground, in ſuch order, as ſhowed them to the greateſt advantage. Cortes and his officers viewed, with admiration, the various manufactures of the country, cotton ſtuffs ſo fine, and of ſuch delicate texture as to reſemble ſilk; pictures of animals, trees, and other natural objects formed with feathers of different colours, diſpoſed and mingled with ſuch ſkill and elegance, as to rival the works of the pencil in truth and beauty of imitation. But what chiefly attracted their eyes, were two large plates of a circular form, one of maſſive gold repreſenting the ſun, the other of ſilver, an emblem of the moon [m]. Theſe were accom-

His preſents.

[m] See NOTE LXXIV.

panied

panied with bracelets, collars, rings, and other trinkets of gold; and that nothing might be wanting which could give the Spaniards a complete idea of what the country afforded, with ſome boxes filled with pearls, precious ſtones, and grains of gold unwrought, as they had been found in the mines or rivers. Cortes received all theſe with an appearance of profound veneration for the monarch by whom they were beſtowed. But when the Mexicans, preſuming upon this, informed him that their maſter, though he deſired him to accept of what he had ſent as a token of his regard for the prince whom he repreſented, would not give his conſent that foreign troops ſhould approach nearer to his capital, or even allow them to continue longer in his dominions, Cortes declared, in a manner more reſolute and peremptory than formerly, that he muſt inſiſt on his firſt demand, as he could not without diſhonour return to his own ſovereign, until he was admitted into the preſence of the prince whom he was appointed to viſit in his name. The Mexicans, aſtoniſhed at ſeeing any man dare to oppoſe that will, which they were accuſtomed to conſider as ſupreme and irreſiſtible, yet afraid of precipitating their country into an open rupture with ſuch formidable enemies, prevailed with Cortes to promiſe, that he would not move from his preſent camp, until the return of a meſſenger, whom they ſent to Montezuma for farther inſtructions [n].

1519.

Forbids Cortes to approach his capital.

THE firmneſs with which Cortes adhered to his original propoſal ſhould, naturally, have brought the negociation between him and Montezuma to a ſpeedy iſſue, as it ſeemed to leave the Mexican monarch no choice, but either to receive him with

State of the Mexican empire at that period.

[n] B. Diaz. c. 39. Gomara Cron. c. 27. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. v. c. 5, 6.

confidence

BOOK V. 1519.

confidence as a friend, or to oppoſe him openly as an enemy. The latter was what might have been expected from a haughty prince in poſſeſſion of extenſive power. The Mexican empire at this period, was at a pitch of grandeur to which no ſociety ever attained in ſo ſhort a period. Though it had ſubſiſted only a hundred and thirty years, its dominion extended from the North to the South Sea, over territories ſtretching above five hundred leagues from eaſt to weſt, and more than two hundred from north to ſouth, comprehending provinces not inferior in fertility, population, and opulence to any in the torrid zone. The people were warlike and enterpriſing. The authority of the monarch unbounded, and his revenues conſiderable. If, with the forces which might have been ſuddenly aſſembled in ſuch an empire, Montezuma had fallen upon the Spaniards while encamped on a barren unhealthy coaſt, unſupported by any ally, without a place of retreat, and deſtitute of proviſions, it is impoſſible, even with all the advantages of their ſuperior diſcipline and arms, that they could have ſtood the ſhock, and they muſt either have periſhed in ſuch an unequal conteſt, or have abandoned the enterpriſe.

Character of the monarch.

As the power of Montezuma enabled him to take this ſpirited part, his own diſpoſitions ſeemed naturally to prompt him to it. Of all the princes who had ſwayed the Mexican ſceptre, he was the moſt haughty, the moſt violent, and the moſt impatient of controul. His ſubjects looked up to him with awe, and his enemies with terror. The former he governed with unexampled rigour, but they were impreſſed with ſuch an opinion of his capacity, as commanded their reſpect; and by many victories over the latter, he had ſpread far the dread of his arms, and had added ſeveral conſiderable provinces to his dominions. But though his talents might be

ſuited

ſuited to the tranſactions of a ſtate ſo imperfectly poliſhed as the Mexican empire, and ſufficient to conduct them while in their accuſtomed courſe, they were altogether inadequate to a conjuncture ſo extraordinary, and did not qualify him either to judge with the diſcernment, or to act with the deciſion, requiſite in ſuch a trying emergence.

His perplexity and terror upon the arrival of the Spaniards.

FROM the moment that the Spaniards appeared on his coaſt, he diſcovered ſymptoms of timidity and embarraſſment. Inſtead of taking ſuch reſolutions as the conſciouſneſs of his own power, or the memory of his former exploits, might have inſpired, he deliberated with an anxiety and heſitation which did not eſcape the notice of his meaneſt courtiers. The perplexity and diſcompoſure of Montezuma's mind upon this occaſion, as well as the general diſmay of his ſubjects, was not owing wholly to the impreſſion which the Spaniards had made by the novelty of their appearance and the terror of their arms. Its origin may be traced up to a more remote ſource. There was an opinion, if we may believe the earlieſt and moſt authentic Spaniſh hiſtorians, almoſt univerſal among the Americans, that ſome dreadful calamity was impending over their heads, from a race of formidable invaders who ſhould come from regions towards the riſing ſun, to overrun and deſolate their country. Whether this diſquieting apprehenſion flowed from the memory of ſome natural calamity which had afflicted that part of the globe, and impreſſed the minds of the inhabitants with ſuperſtitious fears and forebodings, or whether it was an imagination accidentally ſuggeſted by the aſtoniſhment which the firſt ſight of a new race of men occaſioned, it is impoſſible to determine. But as the Mexicans were more prone to ſuperſtition than any people in the New World, they were more deeply affected with the appearance of

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of the Spaniards, whom their credulity inſtantly repreſented as the inſtruments deſtined to bring about that fatal revolution which they dreaded. Under thoſe circumſtances, it ceaſes to be incredible that a handful of adventurers ſhould alarm the monarch of a great empire and all his ſubjects °.

Continues to negociate.

NOTWITHSTANDING the influence of this impreſſion, when the meſſenger arrived from the Spaniſh camp with an account that Cortes, adhering to his original demand, refuſed to obey the order enjoining him to leave the country, Montezuma aſſumed ſome degree of reſolution, and in a tranſport of rage natural to a fierce prince, unaccuſtomed to meet with any oppoſition to his will, he threatened to ſacrifice thoſe preſumptuous ſtrangers to his gods. But his doubts and fears quickly returned, and inſtead of iſſuing orders to carry his threats into execution, he again called his miniſters to confer and offer their advice. Feeble and temporizing meaſures will always be the reſult when men aſſemble to deliberate in a ſituation where they ought to act. The Mexican council took no effectual meaſure for expelling ſuch troubleſome intruders, and were ſatisfied with iſſuing a more poſitive injunction, requiring them to leave the country; but this they prepoſterouſly accompanied with a preſent of ſuch value, as proved a freſh inducement to remain there.

Anxiety and apprehenſions of the Spaniards.

MEANWHILE, the Spaniards were not without ſolicitude or a variety of ſentiments, in deliberating concerning their own future conduct. From what they had already ſeen, many of them formed

° Cortes Relatione Seconda, ap. Ramuſ. iii. 234, 235. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iii. c. 1. lib. v. c. 11. lib. vii. c. 6. Gomara Cron. c. 66. 92. 144.

ſuch

ſuch extravagant ideas concerning the opulence of the country, that, deſpiſing danger or hardſhips, when they had in view treaſures which appeared to be inexhauſtible, they were eager to attempt the conqueſt. Others, eſtimating the power of the Mexican empire by its wealth, and enumerating the various proofs which had occurred of its being under a well regulated adminiſtration, contended that it would be an act of the wildeſt frenzy to attack ſuch a ſtate with a ſmall body of men, in want of proviſions, unconnected with any ally, and already enfeebled by the diſeaſes peculiar to the climate, and the loſs of ſeveral of their number [p]. Cortes ſecretly applauded the advocates for bold meaſures, and cheriſhed their romantic hopes, as ſuch ideas correſponded with his own, and favoured the execution of the ſchemes which he had formed. From the time that the ſuſpicions of Velaſquez broke out with open violence in his attempt to deprive him of the authority which he had conferred, he ſaw the neceſſity of diſſolving a connection which would obſtruct and embarraſs all his operations, and watched for a proper opportunity of coming to a final rupture with him. Having this in view, he had laboured by every art, to ſecure the eſteem and affection of his ſoldiers. With his abilities for command, it was eaſy to gain their eſteem; and his followers were quickly ſatisfied that they might rely, with perfect confidence, on the conduct and courage of their leader. Nor was it more difficult to acquire their affection. Among adventurers, nearly of the ſame rank, and ſerving at their own expence, the dignity of command did not elevate a general above mingling with thoſe who acted under him. Cortes availed himſelf of this freedom of intercourſe, to inſinuate himſelf into their favour, and by his affable manners,

1519.

Schemes of Cortes.

[p] B. Diaz. c. 40.

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by well-timed acts of liberality to ſome, by inſpiring all with vaſt hopes, and by allowing them to trade privately with the natives [q], he attached the greater part of his ſoldiers ſo firmly to himſelf, that they almoſt forgot that the armament had been fitted out by the authority, and at the expence, of another.

His addreſs in carrying them on.

DURING thoſe intrigues, Teutile arrived with the preſent from Montezuma, and, together with it, delivered the ultimate order of that monarch to depart inſtantly out of his dominions; and when Cortes, inſtead of complying, renewed his requeſt of an audience, the Mexican turned from him abruptly, and quitted the camp with looks and geſtures which ſtrongly expreſſed his ſurpriſe and reſentment. Next morning, none of the natives, who uſed to frequent the camp in great numbers, in order to barter with the ſoldiers, and bring in proviſions, appeared. All friendly correſpondence ſeemed now to be at an end, and it was expected every moment that hoſtilities would commence. This, though an event that might have been foreſeen, occaſioned a ſudden conſternation among the Spaniards, which emboldened the adherents of Velaſquez not only to murmur and cabal againſt their general, but to appoint one of their number to remonſtrate openly againſt his imprudence in attempting the conqueſt of a mighty empire with ſuch inadequate force, and to urge the neceſſity of returning to Cuba, in order to refit the fleet and augment the army. Diego de Ordaz, one of his principal officers, whom the malcontents charged with this commiſſion, delivered it with a ſoldiery freedom and bluntneſs, aſſuring him that he ſpoke the ſentiments of the whole army. Cortes liſtened to him without

[q] See NOTE LXXV.

any

any appearance of emotion, and as he well knew the temper and wiſhes of his ſoldiers, and foreſaw how they would receive a propoſition fatal at once to all the ſplendid hopes and ſchemes which they had been forming with ſuch complacency, he carried his diſſimulation ſo far as to ſeem to relinquiſh his own meaſures in compliance with the requeſt of Ordaz, and iſſued orders that the army ſhould be in readineſs next day to reimbark for Cuba. As ſoon as this was known, the diſappointed adventurers exclaimed and threatened; the emiſſaries of Cortes, mingling with them, inflamed their rage; the ferment became general; the whole camp was almoſt in open mutiny; all demanding with eagerneſs to ſee their commander. Cortes was not ſlow in appearing; when, with one voice, they expreſſed their aſtoniſhment and indignation at the orders which they had received. It was unworthy, they cried, of the Caſtilian courage to be daunted at the firſt aſpect of danger, and infamous to fly before any enemy appeared. For their parts, they were determined not to relinquiſh an enterpriſe, that had hitherto been ſucceſsful, and which tended ſo viſibly to ſpread the knowledge of true religion, and to advance the glory and intereſt of their country. Happy under his command, they would follow him with alacrity through every danger, in queſt of thoſe ſettlements and treaſures which he had ſo long held out to their view; but if he choſe rather to return to Cuba, and tamely give up all his hopes of diſtinction and opulence to an envious rival, they would inſtantly chuſe another general to conduct them in that path of glory which he had not ſpirit to enter. 1519.

Cortes, delighted with their ardour, took no offence at the boldneſs with which it was uttered. The ſentiments were what he himſelf had inſpired,

BOOK V. 1519.

and the warmth of expreſſion ſatisfied him that his ſoldiers had imbibed them thoroughly. He affected, however, to be ſurpriſed at what he heard, declaring that his orders to prepare for embarking were iſſued from a perſuaſion that this was agreeable to his troops; that, from deference to what he had been informed was their inclination, he had ſacrificed his own private opinion, which was firmly bent on eſtabliſhing immediately a ſettlement on the ſea-coaſt, and then on endeavouring to penetrate into the interior part of the country; that now he was convinced of his error; and as he perceived that they were animated with the generous ſpirit which breathed in every true Spaniard, he would reſume, with freſh ardour, his original plan of operation, and doubted not to conduct them, in the career of victory, to ſuch independent fortunes as their valour merited. Upon this declaration, ſhouts of applauſe teſtified the exceſs of their joy. The meaſure ſeemed to be taken with unanimous conſent; ſuch as ſecretly condemned it, being obliged to join in the acclamations, partly to conceal their diſaffection from the general, and partly to avoid the imputation of cowardice from their fellow-ſoldiers[r].

Eſtabliſhes a form of civil government.

WITHOUT allowing his men time to cool or to reflect, Cortes ſet about carrying his deſign into execution. In order to give a beginning to a colony, he aſſembled the principal perſons in his army, and by their ſuffrage elected a council and magiſtrates, in whom the government was to be veſted. As men naturally tranſplant the inſtitutions and forms of the mother-country into their new ſettlements, this was framed upon the model of a Spaniſh corporation. The magiſtrates were diſtinguiſhed by the ſame names and enſigns of office, and

[r] B. Diaz. c. 40. 41, 42. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. v. c. 6, 7.

were

were to exerciſe a ſimilar juriſdiction. All the perſons choſen were moſt firmly devoted to Cortes, and the inſtrument of their election was framed in the king's name, without any mention of their dependance on Velaſquez. The two principles of avarice and enthuſiaſm, which prompted the Spaniards to all their enterpriſes in the New World, ſeem to have concurred in ſuggeſting the name which Cortes beſtowed on his intended ſettlement. He called it, *Villa rica de la vera Cruz*; that is, *The rich town of the true Croſs.* BOOK V. 1519.

Reſigns his commiſſion.

THE firſt meeting of the new council was diſtinguiſhed by a tranſaction of great moment. As ſoon as it aſſembled, Cortes applied for leave to enter; and approaching with many marks of profound reſpect, which added dignity to the tribunal, and ſet an example of reverence for its authority, he began a long harangue, in which, with much art, and in terms extremely flattering to perſons juſt entering upon their new function, he obſerved, that as the ſupreme juriſdiction over the colony which they had planted was now veſted in this court, he conſidered them as clothed with the authority and repreſenting the perſon of their ſovereign; that accordingly he would communicate to them what he deemed eſſential to the public ſafety, with the ſame dutiful fidelity as if he were addreſſing his royal maſter; that the ſecurity of a colony ſettled in a great empire, whoſe ſovereign had already diſcovered his hoſtile intentions, depended upon arms, and the efficacy of theſe upon the ſubordination and diſcipline preſerved among the troops; that his right to command was derived from a commiſſion granted by the governor of Cuba; and as that had been long ſince revoked, the lawfulneſs of his juriſdiction might well be queſtioned; that he ſeemed to act upon

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upon a defective, or even a dubious title; nor could they truſt an army which might diſpute the powers of its general, at a juncture when it ought implicitly to obey his orders; that, moved by theſe conſiderations, he now reſigned all his authority to them, that they, having both right to chuſe, and power to confer full juriſdiction, might appoint one, in the king's name, to command the army in its future operations; and as for his own part, ſuch was his zeal for the ſervice in which they were engaged, that he would moſt cheerfully take up a pike with the ſame hand that laid down the general's truncheon, and convince his fellow-ſoldiers, that though accuſtomed to command, he had not forgotten how to obey. Having finiſhed his diſcourſe, he laid the commiſſion from Velaſquez upon the table, and, after kiſſing his truncheon, delivered it to the chief magiſtrate, and withdrew.

and is choſen chief juſtice and captain-general.

THE deliberations of the council were not long, as Cortes had concerted this important meaſure with his confidents, and had prepared the other members, with great addreſs, for the part which he wiſhed them to take. His reſignation was accepted; and as the uninterrupted tenour of their proſperity under his conduct afforded the moſt ſatisfying evidence of his abilities for command, they, by their unanimous ſuffrage, elected him chief juſtice of the colony, and captain-general of its army, and appointed his commiſſion to be made out in the king's name, with moſt ample powers, which were to continue in force until the royal pleaſure ſhould be farther known. That this deed might not be deemed the machination of a junto, the council called together the troops, and acquainted them with what had been reſolved. The ſoldiers, with eager applauſe, ratified their choice; the air reſounded

founded with the name of Cortes, and all vowed to ſhed their blood in ſupport of his authority.

1519. Aſſerts his authority with vigour.

Cortes having now brought his intrigues to the deſired iſſue, and ſhaken off his mortifying dependance on the governor of Cuba, accepted of the commiſſion, which veſted in him ſupreme juriſdiction, civil as well as military, over the colony, with many profeſſions of reſpect to the council, and gratitude to the army. Together with his new command, he aſſumed greater dignity, and began to exerciſe more extenſive powers. Formerly he had felt himſelf to be only the deputy of a ſubject; now he acted as the repreſentative of his ſovereign. The adherents of Velaſquez, fully aware of what would be the effect of this change in his ſituation, could no longer continue ſilent and paſſive ſpectators of his actions. They exclaimed openly againſt the proceedings of the council as illegal, and againſt thoſe of the army as mutinous. Cortes, inſtantly perceiving the neceſſity of giving a timely check to ſuch ſeditious diſcourſe by ſome vigorous meaſure, arreſted Ordaz, Eſcudero, and Velaſquez de Leon, the ringleaders of this faction, and ſent them priſoners aboard the fleet, loaded with chains. Their dependants, aſtoniſhed and overawed, remained quiet; and Cortes, more deſirous to reclaim than to puniſh his priſoners, who were officers of great merit, courted their friendſhip with ſuch aſſiduity and addreſs, that the reconciliation was perfectly cordial; and on the moſt trying occaſions, neither their connection with the governor of Cuba, nor the memory of the indignity with which they had been treated, tempted them to ſwerve from an inviolable attachment to his intereſt[s]. In this, as well as his

[s] B. Diaz. c. 42, 43. Gomara Cron. c. 30, 31. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. v. c. 7.

other

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other negociations at this critical conjuncture, which decided with reſpect to his future fame and fortune, Cortes owed much of his ſucceſs to the Mexican gold, which he diſtributed with a liberal hand both among his friends and his opponents [t].

His friendſhip courted by the Zempoallans.

CORTES, having thus rendered the union between himſelf and his army indiſſoluble by thoſe common acts of diſobedience, thought he might now venture to quit the camp in which he had hitherto remained, and advance into the country. To this he was encouraged by an event no leſs fortunate than ſeaſonable. Some Indians having approached his camp in a myſterious manner, were introduced into his preſence. He found that they were ſent with a proffer of friendſhip from the cazique of Zempoalla, a conſiderable town at no great diſtance; and from their anſwers to a variety of queſtions which he put to them, according to his uſual practice in every interview with the people of the country, he gathered, that their maſter, though ſubject to the Mexican empire, was impatient of the yoke, and filled with ſuch dread and hatred of Montezuma, that nothing could be more acceptable to him than any proſpect of deliverance from the oppreſſion under which he groaned. On hearing this, a ray of light and hope broke in upon the mind of Cortes. He ſaw that the great empire which he intended to attack was not united, nor its ſovereign beloved. He concluded, that the cauſes of diſaffection could not be confined to one province, but that in other corners there muſt be malcontents, ſo weary of ſubjection, or ſo deſirous of change, as to be ready to follow the ſtandard of any protector. Full of thoſe ideas, on which he began

[t] B. Diaz. c. 44.

to

to form a ſcheme, that time, and more perfect information concerning the ſtate of the country, enabled him to mature, he gave a moſt gracious reception to the Zempoallans, and promiſed ſoon to viſit their cazique [u]. 1519.

Marches to Zempoalla.

In order to perform this promiſe, it was not neceſſary to vary the route which he had already fixed for his march. Some officers, whom he had employed to ſurvey the coaſt, having diſcovered a village named Quiabiſlan, about forty miles to the northward, which, both on account of the fertility of the ſoil, and commodiouſneſs of the harbour, ſeemed to be a more proper ſtation for a ſettlement than that where he was encamped, Cortes determined to remove thither. Zempoalla lay in his way, where the cazique received him in the manner which he had reaſon to expect; with gifts and careſſes, like a man ſolicitous to gain his good-will; with reſpect approaching almoſt to adoration, like one who looked up to him as a deliverer. From him he learned many particulars with reſpect to the character of Montezuma, and the circumſtances which rendered his dominion odious. He was a tyrant, as the cazique told him with tears, haughty, cruel, and ſuſpicious; who treated his own ſubjects with arrogance, ruined the conquered provinces by exceſſive exactions, and often tore their ſons and daughters from them by violence; the former, to be offered as victims to his gods; the latter, to be reſerved as concubines for himſelf or favourites. Cortes, in reply to him, artfully inſinuated, that one great object of the Spaniards in viſiting a country ſo remote from their own, was to redreſs grievances, and to relieve the oppreſſed; and having encouraged him to hope for this interpoſition in due time, he continued his march to Quiabiſlan.

[u] B. Diaz. c. 41. Gomara Cron. c. 28.

BOOK V.

1519. Builds a fort.

THE ſpot which his officers had recommended as a proper ſituation, appeared to him to be ſo well choſen, that he immediately marked out ground for a town. The houſes to be erected were only huts; but theſe were to be ſurrounded with fortifications, of ſufficient ſtrength to reſiſt the aſſaults of an Indian army. As the finiſhing of thoſe fortifications was eſſential to the exiſtence of a colony, and of no leſs importance in proſecuting the deſigns which the leader and his followers meditated, both in order to ſecure a place of retreat, and to preſerve their communication with the ſea, every man in the army, officers as well as ſoldiers, put his hand to the work, Cortes himſelf ſetting them an example of activity and perſeverance in labour. The Indians of Zempoalla and Quiabiſlan lent their aid; and this petty ſtation, the parent of ſo many mighty ſettlements, was ſoon in a ſtate of defence [x].

Concludes a formal alliance with ſeveral caziques.

WHILE engaged in this neceſſary work, Cortes had ſeveral interviews with the caziques of Zempoalla and Quiabiſlan; and availing himſelf of their wonder and aſtoniſhment at the new objects which they daily beheld, he gradually inſpired them with ſuch an high opinion of the Spaniards, as beings of a ſuperior order, and irreſiſtible in arms, that, relying on their protection, they ventured to inſult the Mexican power, at the very name of which they were accuſtomed to tremble. Some of Montezuma's officers having appeared to levy the uſual tribute, and to demand a certain number of human victims, as an expiation for their guilt in preſuming to hold intercourſe with thoſe ſtrangers whom the emperor had commanded to leave his dominions, inſtead of obeying the order, they made them pri-

[x] B. Diaz. c. 45, 46, 48. Gomara Cron. c. 32, 33. 37. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. v. c. 8, 9.

ſoners,

ſoners, treated them with great indignity, and as their ſuperſtition was no leſs barbarous than that of the Mexicans, they threatened to ſacrifice them to their gods. From this laſt danger they were delivered by the interpoſition of Cortes, who manifeſted the utmoſt horror at the mention of ſuch a deed. The two caziques having now been puſhed to an act of ſuch open rebellion, as left them no hope of ſafety but in attaching themſelves inviolably to the Spaniards, they ſoon completed their union with them, by formally acknowledging themſelves to be vaſſals of the ſame monarch. Their example was followed by the Totonaques, a fierce people who inhabited the mountainous part of the country. They willingly ſubjected themſelves to the crown of Caſtile, and offered to accompany Cortes, with all their forces, in his march towards Mexico [y].

1519.

His meaſures to procure a confirmation of his authority by the king.

Cortes had now been above three months in New Spain; and though this period had not been diſtinguiſhed by martial enterpriſes, every moment had been employed in operations, which, though leſs ſplendid, were more important. By his addreſs in conducting his intrigues with his own army, as well as his ſagacity in carrying on his negociations with the natives, he had already laid the foundations of his future ſucceſs. But whatever confidence he might place in the plan which he had formed, he could not but perceive, that as his title to command was derived from a doubtful authority, he held it by a precarious tenure. The injuries which Velaſquez had received, were ſuch as would naturally prompt him to apply for redreſs to their common ſovereign; and ſuch a repreſentation might be given of his conduct, that he had reaſon to apprehend, not only that he might be degraded from his preſent rank, but ſub-

[y] B. Diaz. c. 47. Gomara Cron. 35, 36. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. v. c. 9, 10, 11.

jected

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jected to puniſhment. Before he began his march, it was neceſſary to take the moſt effectual precautions againſt this impending danger. With this view, he perſuaded the magiſtrates of his colony to addreſs a letter to the king, containing a long account of their own ſervices; a pompous deſcription of the country which they had diſcovered; its riches, the number of its inhabitants, their civilization and arts; a view of the progreſs which they had already made, in annexing ſeveral extenſive provinces of it to the crown of Caſtile, and of the ſchemes which they had formed, as well as the hopes which they entertained, of reducing the whole to ſubjection; and laſt of all, they gave a minute detail of the motives which had induced them to renounce all connection with Velaſquez, to ſettle a colony dependant upon the crown alone, and to veſt the ſupreme power, civil as well as military, in the hands of Cortes; humbly requeſting their ſovereign to ratify what they had done by his royal authority. Cortes himſelf wrote in a ſimilar ſtrain; and as he knew that the Spaniſh court, accuſtomed to the exaggerated repreſentations of every new country by its diſcoverer, would give little credit to their ſplendid accounts of New Spain, if they were not accompanied with ſuch a ſpecimen of what it contained, as would excite an high idea of its opulence, he ſolicited his ſoldiers to relinquiſh what they might claim as their part of the treaſures which had hitherto been collected, in order that the whole might be ſent to the king. Such was the aſcendant which he had acquired over their minds, and ſuch their own romantic expectations of future wealth, that an army of indigent and rapacious adventurers was capable of this generous effort, and offered to their ſovereign the richeſt preſent that had hitherto been tranſmitted from the New World [g].

[g] See NOTE LXXVI.

Portocarrero

Portocarrero and Montejo, the chief magiſtrates of the colony, were appointed to carry this preſent to Caſtile, with expreſs orders not to touch at Cuba in their paſſage thither [a]. 1519.

A conſpiracy againſt Cortes.

WHILE a veſſel was preparing for their departure, an unexpected event occaſioned a general alarm. Some ſoldiers and ſailors, ſecretly attached to Velaſquez, or intimidated at the proſpect of the dangers unavoidable in attempting to penetrate into the heart of a great empire with ſuch unequal force, formed the deſign of ſeizing one of the brigantines, and making their eſcape to Cuba, in order to give the governor ſuch intelligence as might enable him to intercept the ſhip which was to carry the treaſure and diſpatches to Spain. This conſpiracy, though formed by perſons of low rank, was conducted with profound ſecrecy; but at the moment when every thing was ready for execution, they were betrayed by one of their aſſociates.

He deſtroys his fleet.

THOUGH the good fortune of Cortes interpoſed ſo ſeaſonably on this occaſion, the detection of this conſpiracy filled his mind with moſt diſquieting apprehenſions, and prompted him to execute a ſcheme which he had long revolved. He perceived that the ſpirit of diſaffection ſtill lurked among his troops; that though hitherto checked by the uniform ſucceſs of his ſchemes, or kept down by the hand of authority, various events might occur which would encourage and call it forth. He obſerved, that many of his men, weary of the fatigue of ſervice, longed to reviſit their ſettlements in Cuba; and that upon any appearance of extraordinary danger, or any reverſe of fortune, it would be impoſſible to reſtrain them from returning thither. He

[a] B. Diaz. c. 54. Gomara Cron. c. 40.

was

BOOK V. 1519. was ſenſible that his forces, already too feeble, could bear no diminution, and that a very ſmall defection of his followers would oblige him to abandon the enterpriſe. After ruminating, often, and with much ſolicitude, upon thoſe particulars, he ſaw no hope of ſucceſs, but in cutting off all poſſibility of retreat, and reducing his men to the neceſſity of adopting the ſame reſolution with which he himſelf was animated, either to conquer or to periſh. With this view, he determined to deſtroy his fleet; but as he durſt not venture to execute ſuch a bold reſolution by his ſingle authority, he laboured to bring his ſoldiers to adopt his ideas with reſpect to the propriety of this meaſure. His addreſs in accompliſhing this was not inferior to the arduous occaſion in which it was employed. He perſuaded ſome, that the ſhips had ſuffered ſo much by having been long at ſea, as to be altogether unfit for ſervice; to others he pointed out what a ſeaſonable reinforcement of ſtrength they would derive from the junction of an hundred men, now unprofitably employed as ſailors; and to all he repreſented the neceſſity of fixing their eyes and wiſhes upon what was before them, without allowing the idea of a retreat once to enter their thoughts. With univerſal conſent the ſhips were drawn aſhore, and after ſtripping them of their ſails, rigging, iron-works, and whatever elſe might be of uſe, they were broke in pieces. Thus, from an effort of magnanimity, to which there is nothing parallel in hiſtory, five hundred men voluntarily conſented to be ſhut up in a hoſtile country, filled with powerful and unknown nations; and having precluded every means of eſcape, left themſelves without any reſource but their own valour and perſeverance [b].

[b] Relat. di Cortes. Ramuſ. iii. 225. B. Diaz. c. 57, 58. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. v. c. 14.

NOTHING

NOTHING now retarded Cortes; the alacrity of his troops and the diſpoſition of his allies were equally favourable. All the advantages, however, derived from the latter, though procured by much aſſiduity and addreſs, were well-nigh loſt in a moment by an indiſcreet ſally of religious zeal, which, on many occaſions, precipitated Cortes into actions inconſiſtent with the prudence that diſtinguiſhes his character. Though hitherto he had neither time nor opportunity to explain to the natives the errors of their own ſuperſtition, or to inſtruct them in the principles of the Chriſtian faith, he commanded his ſoldiers to overturn the altars and to deſtroy the idols in the chief temple of Zempoalla, and in their place to erect a crucifix and an image of the Virgin Mary. The people beheld this with aſtoniſhment and horror; the prieſts excited them to arms; but ſuch was the authority of Cortes, and ſo great the aſcendant which the Spaniards had acquired, that the commotion was appeaſed without bloodſhed, and concord perfectly re-eſtabliſhed [c]. 1519.

Advances into the country.

CORTES began his march from Zempoalla on the ſixteenth of Auguſt, with five hundred men, fifteen horſe, and ſix field-pieces. The reſt of his troops, conſiſting chiefly of ſuch as from age or infirmity were leſs fit for active ſervice, he left as a garriſon in Villa Rica, under the command of Eſcalante, an officer of merit, and warmly attached to his intereſt. The cazique of Zempoalla ſupplied him with proviſions, and with two hundred of thoſe Indians called *Tamemes*, whoſe office, in a country where tame animals were unknown, was to carry burdens, and perform all ſervile labour. They were a great relief to the Spaniſh ſoldiers, who hitherto had been obliged,

[c] B. Diaz. c. 41, 42. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. v. c. 3, 4.

not

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not only to carry their own baggage, but to drag along the artillery by main force. He offered likewiſe a conſiderable body of his troops, but Cortes was ſatisfied with four hundred; taking care, however, to chuſe perſons of ſuch note as might prove hoſtages for the fidelity of their maſter. Nothing memorable happened in his progreſs, until he arrived on the confines of Tlaſcala. The inhabitants of that province, a warlike people, were implacable enemies of the Mexicans, and had been united in an ancient alliance with the caziques of Zempoalla. Though leſs civilized than the ſubjects of Montezuma, they were advanced in improvement far beyond the rude nations of America, whoſe manners we have deſcribed. They had made conſiderable progreſs in agriculture; they dwelt in large towns; they were not ſtrangers to ſome ſpecies of commerce; and in the imperfect accounts of their inſtitutions and laws, tranſmitted to us by the early Spaniſh writers, we diſcern traces both of diſtributive juſtice and of criminal juriſdiction, in their interior police. But ſtill, as the degree of their civilization was incomplete, and as they depended for ſubſiſtence not on agriculture alone, but truſted for it, in a great meaſure, to hunting, they retained many of the qualities natural to men in this ſtate. Like them, they were fierce and revengeful; like them, too, they were high-ſpirited and independant. In conſequence of the former, they were involved in perpetual hoſtilities, and had but a ſlender and occaſional intercourſe with neighbouring ſtates. The latter inſpired them with ſuch deteſtation of ſervitude, that they not only refuſed to ſtoop to a foreign yoke, and maintained an obſtinate and ſucceſsful conteſt in defence of their liberty againſt the ſuperior power of the Mexican empire, but they guarded with equal ſolicitude againſt domeſtic tyranny; and diſdaining to acknowledge

knowledge any maſter, they lived under the mild and limited juriſdiction of a council elected by their ſeveral tribes. BOOK V. 1519.

His war with the Tlaſcalans.

CORTES, though he had received information concerning the martial character of this people, flattered himſelf that his profeſſions of delivering the oppreſſed from the tyranny of Montezuma, their enmity to the Mexicans, and the example of their ancient allies the Zempoallans, might induce them to grant him a friendly reception. In order to diſpoſe them to this, four Zempoallans of great eminence were ſent ambaſſadors, to requeſt, in his name and in that of their cazique, that they would permit the Spaniards to paſs through the territories of Tlaſcala in their way to Mexico. But inſtead of the favourable anſwer which was expected, the Tlaſcalans ſeized the ambaſſadors, and, without any regard to their public character, made preparations for ſacrificing them to their gods. At the ſame time, they aſſembled their troops, in order to oppoſe thoſe unknown invaders, if they ſhould attempt to make their paſſage good by force of arms. Various motives concurred in precipitating the Tlaſcalans into this reſolution. A fierce people, ſhut up within its own narrow precincts, and little accuſtomed to any intercourſe with foreigners, is apt to conſider every ſtranger as an enemy, and is eaſily excited to arms. They concluded, from Cortes's propoſal of viſiting Montezuma in his capital, that, notwithſtanding all his profeſſions, he courted the friendſhip of a monarch whom they both hated and feared. The imprudent zeal of Cortes in violating the temples in Zempoalla, filled the Tlaſcalans with horror; and as they were no leſs attached to their ſuperſtition than the other nations of New Spain, they were impatient to avenge their injured gods, and to acquire the

BOOK V. 1519.

merit of offering up to them as victims those impious men, who had dared to profane their altars; the Spaniards, from the smallness of their number, were objects of their contempt; they had not yet measured their own strength with theirs, and had no idea of the superiority which they derived from their arms and discipline.

Aug. 30. Success of it.

CORTES, after waiting some days, in vain, for the return of his ambassadors, advanced into the Tlascalan territories. As the resolutions of people who delight in war are executed with no less promptitude than they are formed, he found troops in the field ready to oppose him. They attacked him with great intrepidity, and in the first encounter, wounded some of the Spaniards, and killed two horses; a loss, in their situation, of great moment, because it was irreparable. From this specimen of the courage of his new enemies, Cortes saw the necessity of proceeding with caution. His army marched in close order; he chose the stations, where he halted with attention, and fortified every camp with extraordinary care. During fourteen days he was exposed to almost uninterrupted assaults, the Tlascalans advancing with numerous armies, and renewing the attack in various forms, with a degree of valour and perseverance to which the Spaniards had seen nothing parallel in the New World. The Spanish historians describe those successive battles with great pomp, and enter into a minute detail of particulars, mingling many exaggerated and incredible circumstances [d] with those which are real and marvellous. But no power of words can render the recital of a combat interesting, where there is no equality of danger; and when the narrative closes with an

[d] See NOTE LXXVII.

account

account of thouſands ſlain on the one ſide, while not a ſingle perſon falls on the other, the moſt laboured deſcriptions of the previous diſpoſition of the troops, or of the various viciſſitudes in the engagement, command no attention.

1519.

THERE are ſome circumſtances, however, in this war, which are memorable and merit notice, as they throw light upon the character both of the people of New Spain, and of their conquerors. Though the Tlaſcalans brought into the field ſuch vaſt armies as appear ſufficient to have overwhelmed the Spaniards, they were never able to make any impreſſion upon their ſmall battalion. Singular as this may ſeem, it is not inexplicable. The Tlaſcalans, though addicted to war, were, like all unpoliſhed nations, ſtrangers to military order and diſcipline, and loſt all the advantage which they might have derived from their numbers, and the impetuoſity of their attack, by their conſtant ſolicitude to carry off the dead and wounded. This point of honour, founded on a ſentiment of tenderneſs natural to the human mind, and ſtrengthened by anxiety to preſerve the bodies of their countrymen from being devoured by their enemies, was univerſal among the people of New Spain. Attention to this pious office occupied them, even during the heat of combat [e], broke their union, and diminiſhed the force of the impreſſion which they might have made by a joint effort.

Some ſingular circumſtances in it.

NOT only was their ſuperiority in number of little avail, but the imperfection of their military weapons rendered their valour in a great meaſure inoffenſive. After three battles, and many ſkirmiſhes and aſſaults, not one Spaniard was killed in

[e] B. Diaz. c. 65.

BOOK V. 1519.

the field. Arrows and ſpears, headed with flint or the bones of fiſhes, ſtakes hardened in the fire, and wooden ſwords, though deſtructive weapons among naked Indians, were eaſily turned aſide by the Spaniſh bucklers, and could hardly penetrate the *eſcaupiles*, or quilted jackets which the ſoldiers wore. The Tlaſcalans advanced boldly to the charge, and often fought hand to hand. Many of the Spaniards were wounded, though all ſlightly, which cannot be imputed to any want of courage in their enemies, but to the defect of the arms with which they aſſailed them.

NOTWITHSTANDING the fury with which the Tlaſcalans attacked the Spaniards, they ſeem to have conducted their hoſtilities with ſome degree of barbarous generoſity. They gave the Spaniards warning of their hoſtile intentions, and as they knew that they wanted proviſions, and imagined, perhaps, like the other Americans, that they had left their own country becauſe it did not afford them ſubſiſtence, they ſent to their camp a large ſupply of poultry and maize, deſiring them to eat plentifully, becauſe they ſcorned to attack an enemy enfeebled by hunger, and it would be an affront to their Gods to offer them famiſhed victims, as well as diſagreeable to themſelves to feed on ſuch emaciated prey [f].

WHEN they were taught by the firſt encounter with their new enemies, that it was not eaſy to execute this threat; when they perceived, in the ſubſequent engagements, that notwithſtanding all the efforts of their own valour, of which they had a very high opinion, not one of the Spaniards was ſlain or taken, they began to conceive

[f] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. vi. c. 6. Gomara Cron. c. 47.

them

them to be a ſuperior order of beings, againſt whom human power could not avail. In this extremity, they had recourſe to their prieſts, requiring them to reveal the myſterious cauſes of ſuch extraordinary events, and to declare what new means they ſhould employ in order to repulſe thoſe formidable invaders. The prieſts, after many ſacrifices and incantations, delivered this reſponſe. That theſe ſtrangers were the offspring of the ſun, procreated by his animating energy in the regions of the eaſt; that, by day, while cheriſhed with the influence of his parental beams, they were invincible; but by night, when his reviving heat was withdrawn, their vigour declined and faded like the herbs in the field, and they dwindled down into mortal men [g]. Theories leſs plauſible have gained credit with more enlightened nations, and have influenced their conduct. In conſequence of this, the Tlaſcalans, with the implicit confidence of men who fancy themſelves to be under the guidance of Heaven, acted in contradiction to one of their moſt eſtabliſhed maxims in war, and ventured to attack the enemy in the night-time, in hopes of deſtroying them when enfeebled and ſurpriſed. But Cortes had more vigilance and diſcernment than to be deceived by the rude ſtratagems of an Indian army. The centinels at his out-poſts, obſerving ſome extraordinary movement among the Tlaſcalans, gave the alarm. In a moment the troops were under arms, and ſallying out, diſperſed the party with great ſlaughter, without allowing them to approach the camp. Convinced, by ſad experience, that their prieſts had deluded them, and ſatisfied that they attempted in vain, either to deceive or to vanquiſh their enemies, the fierceneſs of the Tlaſcalans abated, and they began to incline ſeriouſly to peace.

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[g] B. Diaz. c. 66.

THEY

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1519.

The Tlaſcalans diſpoſed to peace.

THEY were at a loſs, however, in what manner to addreſs the ſtrangers, what idea to form of their character, and whether to conſider them as beings of a gentle or of a malevolent nature. There were circumſtances in their conduct which ſeemed to favour each opinion. On the one hand, as the Spaniards conſtantly diſmiſſed the priſoners whom they took, not only without injury, but often with preſents of European toys, and renewed their offers of peace after every victory; this lenity amazed people accuſtomed to the exterminating ſyſtem of war known in America, and who ſacrificed and devoured without mercy all the captives taken in battle, and diſpoſed them to entertain favourable ſentiments of their humanity. But, on the other hand, as Cortes had ſeized fifty of their countrymen who brought proviſions to his camp, and ſuppoſing them to be ſpies, had cut off their hands [h]; this bloody ſpectacle, added to the terror occaſioned by the fire-arms and horſes, filled them with dreadful impreſſions of their ferocity [i]. Accordingly, this uncertainty was apparent in their mode of addreſſing the Spaniards. "If, ſaid they, you are divinities of a cruel and ſavage nature, we preſent to you five ſlaves, that you may drink their blood and eat their fleſh. If you are mild deities, accept an offering of incenſe and variegated plumes. If you are men, here is meat, and bread and fruit to nouriſh you [k]". The peace which both parties now

Concluded.

deſired with equal ardour, was ſoon concluded. The Tlaſcalans yielded themſelves as vaſſals to the crown of Caſtile, and engaged to aſſiſt Cortes in all his future operations. He took the republic under his protection, and promiſed to defend their perſons and poſſeſſions from injury or violence.

[h] Cortes Relat. Ramuſ. iii. 228. C. Gomara Cron. c. 48.
[i] See NOTE LXXVIII. [k] B. Diaz. c. 70. Gomara Cron. c. 47. Herrera dec. 2. lib. vi. c. 7.

THIS

THIS treaty was concluded at a ſeaſonable juncture for the Spaniards. The fatigue of ſervice among a ſmall body of men, ſurrounded by ſuch a multitude of enemies, was incredible. Half the army was on duty every night, and even they whoſe turn it was to reſt, ſlept always upon their arms, that they might be ready to run to their poſts on a moment's warning. Many of them were wounded, a good number, and among theſe Cortes himſelf, laboured under the diſtemper peculiar to the climate, and ſeveral had died ſince they ſet out from Vera Cruz. Notwithſtanding the ſupplies which they received from the Tlaſcalans, they were often in want of proviſions, and ſo deſtitute of the neceſſaries moſt requiſite in dangerous ſervice, that they had no ſalve to dreſs their wounds, but what was compoſed with the fat of the Indians whom they had ſlain [l]. Worn out with ſuch intolerable toil and hardſhips, many of the ſoldiers began to murmur, and when they reflected on the multitude and boldneſs of their enemies, more were ready to deſpair. It required the utmoſt exertion of Cortes's authority and addreſs to check this ſpirit of deſpondency in its progreſs, and to reanimate his followers with their wonted ſenſe of their own ſuperiority over the enemies with whom they had to contend [m]. The ſubmiſſion of the Tlaſcalans, and their own triumphant entry into the capital city, where they were received with the reverence paid to beings of a ſuperior order, baniſhed, at once, from the minds of the Spaniards all memory of paſt ſufferings, diſpelled every anxious thought with reſpect to their future operations, and fully ſatisfied them that there was not now any power in America able to withſtand their arms [n].

1519. Advantages of it to the Spaniards.

[l] B. Diaz. c. 62. 65. [m] Cortes Relat. Ramuſ. iii. 229. B. Diaz. c. 69. Gomara Cron. c. 51.

[n] Cortes Relat. Ramuſ. iii. 230. B. Diaz. c. 72.

CORTES

BOOK V.

CORTES remained twenty days in Tlaſcala, in order to allow his troops a ſhort interval of repoſe after ſuch hard ſervice. During that time, he was employed in tranſactions and inquiries of great moment with reſpect to his future ſchemes. In his daily conferences with the Tlaſcalan chiefs, he received information concerning every particular relative to the ſtate of the Mexican empire, or to the qualities of its ſovereign, which could be of uſe in regulating his conduct, whether he ſhould be obliged to act as a friend or as an enemy. As he found that the antipathy of his new allies to the Mexican nation was no leſs implacable than had been repreſented, and perceived what benefit he might derive from the aid of ſuch powerful confederates, he employed all his powers of inſinuation in order to gain their confidence. Nor was any extraordinary exertion of theſe neceſſary. The Tlaſcalans, with the levity of mind natural to unpoliſhed men, were, of their own accord, diſpoſed to run from the extreme of hatred to that of fondneſs. Every thing in the appearance and conduct of their gueſts, was to them matter of wonder [o]. They gazed at whatever the Spaniards did with admiration, and fancying them to be of heavenly origin, were eager not only to comply with their demands, but to anticipate their wiſhes. They offered, accordingly, to accompany Cortes in his march to Mexico, with all the forces of the republic, under the command of their moſt experienced captains.

1519. Cortes ſolicitous to gain their confidence,

BUT, after beſtowing ſo much pains on cementing this union, all the beneficial fruits of it were on the point of being loſt, by a new effuſion of that intemperate zeal with which

which he had almoſt loſt by his raſh zeal.

[o] See NOTE LXXIX.

Cortes

Cortes was animated, no leſs than the other adventurers of the age. They all conſidered themſelves as inſtruments employed by Heaven to propagate the Chriſtian faith, and the leſs they were qualified either by their knowledge or morals for ſuch a function, they were more eager to diſcharge it. The profound veneration of the Tlaſcalans for the Spaniards, having encouraged Cortes to explain to ſome of their chiefs the doctrines of the Chriſtian religion, and to inſiſt that they ſhould abandon their own ſuperſtitions, and embrace the faith of their new friends, they, according to an idea univerſal among barbarous nations, readily acknowledged the truth and excellence of what he taught; but contended, that the *Teules* of Tlaſcala were divinities no leſs than the God in whom the Spaniards believed; and as that Being was intitled to their homage, ſo they were bound to revere the ſame powers which their anceſtors had worſhipped. Cortes continued, nevertheleſs, to urge his demand in a tone of authority, mingling threats with his arguments, until the Tlaſcalans could bear it no longer, and conjured him never to mention this again, leſt the Gods ſhould avenge on their heads the guilt of having liſtened to ſuch a propoſition. Cortes, aſtoniſhed and enraged at their obſtinacy, prepared to execute by force what he could not accompliſh by perſuaſion, and was going to overturn their altars, and caſt down their idols with the ſame violent hand as at Zempoalla, if father Bartholomew de Olmedo, chaplain to the expedition, had not checked his inconſiderate impetuoſity. He repreſented the imprudence of ſuch an attempt in a large city newly reconciled, and filled with people no leſs ſuperſtitious than warlike; he declared that the proceeding at Zempoalla had always appeared to him precipitate and unjuſt; that religion was not to be propagated by the ſword, or infidels to be converted by violence;

BOOK V. 1519.

violence; that other weapons were to be employed in this miniſtry, patient inſtruction muſt enlighten the underſtanding, and pious example captivate the heart, before men could be induced to abandon error and embrace the truth [p]. Amidſt ſcenes, where a narrow-minded bigotry appears in ſuch cloſe union with oppreſſion and cruelty, ſentiments ſo liberal and humane, ſooth the mind with unexpected pleaſure; and at a time, when the rights of conſcience were little underſtood in the Chriſtian world, and the idea of toleration unknown, one is aſtoniſhed to find a Spaniſh monk of the ſixteenth century among the firſt advocates againſt perſecution, and in behalf of religious liberty. The remonſtrances of an eccleſiaſtic no leſs reſpectable for wiſdom than virtue, had their proper weight with Cortes. He left the Tlaſcalans in the undiſturbed exerciſe of their own rites, requiring only that they ſhould deſiſt from their horrid practice of offering human victims in ſacrifice.

Advances to Cholula.

CORTES, as ſoon as his troops were fit for ſervice, reſolved to continue his march towards Mexico, notwithſtanding the earneſt diſſuaſives of the Tlaſcalans, who repreſented his deſtruction as unavoidable, if he put himſelf in the power of a prince ſo faithleſs and cruel as Montezuma. As he was accompanied by ſix thouſand Tlaſcalans, he had now now the command of forces which reſembled a regular army. They directed their courſe towards Cholula; Montezuma, who had at length conſented to admit the Spaniards into his preſence, having informed Cortes, that he had given orders for his friendly reception there. Cholula was a conſiderable town, and though only five leagues diſtant from Tlaſcala, was formerly an independent ſtate, but

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[p] P. Diaz. c. 77. p. 54. c. 83. p. 61.

had

had been lately ſubjected to the Mexican empire. This was conſidered by all the people of New Spain as a holy place, the ſanctuary and chief ſeat of their gods, to which pilgrims reſorted from every province, and a greater number of human victims were offered in its principal temple than even in that of Mexico [q]. Montezuma ſeems to have invited the Spaniards thither, either from ſome ſuperſtitious hope that the gods would not ſuffer this ſacred manſion to be defiled, without pouring down their wrath upon thoſe impious ſtrangers, who ventured to inſult their power in the place of its peculiar reſidence, or from a belief that he himſelf might there attempt to cut them off with more certain ſucceſs, under the immediate protection of his divinities. 1519.

The ſeverity of his procedure there.

CORTES had been warned by the Tlaſcalans, before he ſet out on his march, to keep a watchful eye over the Cholulans. He himſelf, though received into the town with much ſeeming reſpect and cordiality, obſerved ſeveral circumſtances in their conduct which excited ſuſpicion. Two of the Tlaſcalans, who were encamped at ſome diſtance from the town, as the Cholulans refuſed to admit their ancient enemies within its precincts, having found means to enter in diſguiſe, acquainted Cortes, that they obſerved the women and children of the principal citizens retiring in great hurry every night; and that ſix children had been ſacrificed in the chief temple, a rite which indicated the execution of ſome warlike enterpriſe to be approaching. At the ſame time, Marina the interpreter received information from an Indian woman of diſtinction, whoſe confidence ſhe had gained, that the deſtruction of her friends was concerted; that a body of

[q] Torquemada Monar. Ind. i. 281, 282. ii. 291. Gomara Cron. c. 61. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. vii. c. 2.

Mexican

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Mexican troops lay concealed near the town; that ſome of the ſtreets were barricaded, and in others, pits or deep trenches were dug, and ſlightly covered over, as traps into which the horſe might fall; that ſtones and miſſive weapons were collected on the tops of the temples, with which to overwhelm the infantry; that the fatal hour was now at hand, and their ruin unavoidable. Cortes, alarmed at this concurring evidence, ſecretly arreſted three of the chief prieſts, and extorted from them a confeſſion that confirmed the intelligence which he had received. As not a moment was to be loſt, he inſtantly reſolved to prevent his enemies, and to inflict on them ſuch dreadful vengeance as might ſtrike Montezuma and his ſubjects with terror. For this purpoſe, the Spaniards and Zempoallans were drawn up in a large court, which had been allotted for their quarters near the centre of the town; the Tlaſcalans had orders to advance; the magiſtrates, and ſeveral of the chief citizens, were ſent for under various pretexts, and ſeized. On a ſignal given, the troops ruſhed out, and fell upon the multitude, deſtitute of leaders, and ſo much aſtoniſhed, that the weapons dropped from their hands, and they ſtood motionleſs, and incapable of defence. While the Spaniards preſſed them in front, the Tlaſcalans attacked them in the rear. The ſtreets were filled with bloodſhed and death. The temples, which afforded a retreat to the prieſts and ſome of the leading men, were ſet on fire, and they periſhed in the flames. This ſcene of horror continued two days; during which, the wretched inhabitants ſuffered all that the deſtructive rage of the Spaniards, or the implacable revenge of their Indian allies, could inflict. At length the carnage ceaſed, after the ſlaughter of ſix thouſand Cholulans, without the loſs of a ſingle Spaniard. Cortes then releaſed the magiſtrates, and reproaching them bitterly for their intended

intended treachery, declared, that as juſtice was now appeaſed, he forgave the offence, but required them to recall the citizens who had fled, and re-eſtabliſh order in the town. Such was the aſcendant which the Spaniards had acquired over this ſuperſtitious race of men, and ſo deeply were they impreſſed with an opinion of their ſuperior diſcernment, as well as power, that, in obedience to this command, the city was in a few days filled again with people, who, amidſt the ruins of their ſacred buildings, yielded reſpectful ſervice to men whoſe hands were ſtained with the blood of their relations and fellow-citizens [r].

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FROM Cholula, Cortes advanced directly towards Mexico, which was only twenty leagues diſtant. In every place through which he paſſed, he was received as a perſon poſſeſſed of ſufficient power to deliver the empire from the oppreſſion under which it groaned; and the caziques or governors, with the unreſerved confidence repoſed in ſuperior beings, communicated to him all the grievances which they felt under the tyrannical government of Montezuma. When Cortes firſt obſerved the ſeeds of diſcontent in the remote provinces of the empire, a ray of hope broke in upon his mind; but when he diſcovered ſuch ſymptoms of alienation from their monarch near the ſeat of government, he concluded that the vital parts of the conſtitution were effected, and conceived the moſt ſanguine expectations of overturning a ſtate whoſe natural ſtrength was thus divided and impaired. While thoſe reflections encouraged the general to perſiſt in his arduous undertaking, the ſoldiers were no leſs animated by obſervations more obvious to their ca-

Oct. 29. Advances towards Mexico.

[r] Cortes Relat. Ramuſ. iii. 231. B. Diaz. c. 83. Gomara Cron. c. 64. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. vii. c. 1, 2. See NOTE LXXX.

pacity.

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pacity. In deſcending from the mountains of Chalco, acroſs which the road lay, the vaſt plain of Mexico opened gradually to their view. When they firſt beheld this proſpect, one of the moſt ſtriking and beautiful on the face of the earth; when they obſerved fertile and cultivated fields, ſtretching farther than the eye could reach; when they ſaw a lake reſembling the ſea in extent, encompaſſed with large towns, and diſcovered the capital city riſing upon an iſland in the middle, adorned with its temples and turrets; the ſcene ſo far exceeded their imagination, that ſome believed the fanciful deſcriptions of romance were realized, and that its enchanted palaces and gilded domes were preſented to their ſight; others could hardly perſuade themſelves that this wonderful ſpectacle was any thing more than a dream [s]. As they advanced, their doubts were removed, but their amazement increaſed. They were now fully ſatisfied that the country was rich beyond any conception which they had formed of it, and flattered themſelves, that at length they ſhould obtain an ample recompence for all their ſervices and ſufferings.

First view of it.

The irreſolution of Montezuma.

No enemy had yet appeared to oppoſe their progreſs, though ſeveral circumſtances occurred which led them to ſuſpect that ſome deſign was formed to ſurpriſe and cut them off. Many meſſengers arrived ſucceſſively from Montezuma, permitting them one day to advance, requiring them on the next to retire, as his hopes or fears alternately prevailed; and ſo wonderful was this infatuation, which ſeems to be unaccountable on any ſuppoſition but that of a ſuperſtitious dread of the Spaniards, as beings of a ſuperior nature, that Cortes was almoſt at the gates of the capital, before the monarch had determined whether to receive him as a friend, or to oppoſe him

[s] See NOTE LXXXI.

as

as an enemy. But as no ſign of open hoſtility appeared, the Spaniards, without regarding the fluctuations of Montezuma's ſentiments, continued their march along the cauſeway which led to Mexico through the lake, with great circumſpection and the ſtricteſt diſcipline, though without ſeeming to ſuſpect the prince whom they were about to viſit. 1519.

His firſt interview with the Spaniards.

WHEN they drew near the city, about a thouſand perſons, who appeared to be of diſtinction, came forth to meet them, adorned with plumes, and clad in mantles of fine cotton. Each of theſe, in his order, paſſed by Cortes, and ſaluted him according to the mode deemed moſt reſpectful and ſubmiſſive in their country. They announced the approach of Montezuma himſelf, and ſoon after his harbingers came in ſight. There appeared firſt two hundred perſons in an uniform dreſs, with large plumes of feathers, alike in faſhion, marching two and two, in deep ſilence, barefooted, with their eyes fixed on the ground. Theſe were followed by a company of higher rank, in their moſt ſhowy apparel, in the midſt of whom was Montezuma, in a chair or litter richly ornamented with gold and feathers of various colours. Four of his principal favourites carried him on their ſhoulders, others ſupported a canopy of curious workmanſhip over his head. Before him marched three officers with rods of gold in their hands, which they lifted up on high at certain intervals, and at that ſignal all the people bowed their heads, and hid their faces, as unworthy to look on ſo great a monarch. When he drew near, Cortes diſmounted, advancing towards him with officious haſte, and in a reſpectful poſture. At the ſame time Montezuma alighted from his chair, and leaning on the arms of two of his near relations, approached with a ſlow and ſtately pace, his attendants covering the ſtreet with cotton cloths,

that

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that he might not touch the ground. Cortes accoſted him with profound reverence, after the European faſhion. He returned the ſalutation, according to the mode of his country, by touching the earth with his hand, and then kiſſing it. This ceremony, the cuſtomary expreſſion of reverence from inferiors towards thoſe who were above them in rank, appeared ſuch amazing condeſcenſion in a proud monarch, who ſcarcely deigned to conſider the reſt of mankind as of the ſame ſpecies with himſelf, that all his ſubjects firmly believed thoſe perſons, before whom he humbled himſelf in this manner, to be ſomething more than human. Accordingly, as they marched through the crowd, the Spaniards frequently, and with much ſatisfaction, heard themſelves denominated *Teules*, or divinities. Nothing material paſſed in this firſt interview. Montezuma conducted Cortes to the quarters which he had prepared for his reception, and immediately took leave of him, with a politeneſs not unworthy of a court more refined. "You are now," ſays he, "with your brothers, in your own houſe; refreſh yourſelves after your fatigue, and be happy until I return [t]." The place allotted to the Spaniards for their lodging was a houſe built by the father of Montezuma. It was ſurrounded by a ſtone-wall, with towers at proper diſtances, which ſerved for defence as well as for ornament, and its apartments and courts were ſo large as to accommodate both the Spaniards and their Indian allies. The firſt care of Cortes was to take precautions for his ſecurity, by planting the artillery ſo as to command the different avenues which led to it, by appointing a large diviſion of his troops to be always on guard, and by poſting centinels at proper ſtations, with injunctions to obſerve the ſame vigilant diſcipline as if they were within ſight of an enemy's camp.

[t] Cortes Relat. Ram. iii. 232—235. B. Diaz. c. 83—88. Gomara Cron. c. 64, 65. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. vii. c. 3, 4, 5.

In

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1519. His idea of the Spaniards.

In the evening Montezuma returned to viſit his gueſts with the ſame pomp as in their firſt interview, and brought preſents of ſuch value, not only to Cortes and to his officers, but even to the private men, as proved the liberality of the monarch to be ſuitable to the opulence of his kingdom. A long conference enſued, in which Cortes learned what was the opinion of Montezuma with reſpect to the Spaniards. It was an eſtabliſhed tradition, he told him, among the Mexicans, that their anceſtors came originally from a remote region, and conquered the provinces now ſubject to his dominion; that after they were ſettled there, the great captain who conducted this colony returned to his own country, promiſing, that at ſome future period his deſcendants ſhould viſit them, aſſume the government, and reform their conſtitution and laws; that, from what he had heard and ſeen of Cortes and his followers, he was convinced that they were the very perſons whoſe appearance their traditions and prophecies taught them to expect; that accordingly he had received them, not as ſtrangers, but as relations of the ſame blood and parentage, and deſired that they might conſider themſelves as maſters in his dominions, for both himſelf and his ſubjects ſhould be ready to comply with their will, and even to prevent their wiſhes. Cortes made a reply in his uſual ſtile with reſpect to the dignity and power of his ſovereign, and his intention in ſending him into that country; artfully endeavouring ſo to frame his diſcourſe, that it might coincide as much as poſſible with the idea which Montezuma had formed concerning the origin of the Spaniards. Next morning, Cortes and ſome of his principal attendants were admitted to a public audience of the emperor. The three ſubſequent days were employed in viewing the city; the appearance of which, ſo far ſuperior in the order of its buildings and the num-

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ber of its inhabitants to any place the Spaniards had beheld in America, and yet ſo little reſembling the ſtructure of an European city, filled them with ſurpriſe and admiration.

MEXICO, *Tenuchtitlan* as it was anciently called by the natives, is ſituated in a large plain, environed by mountains of ſuch height, that, though within the torrid zone, the temperature of its climate is mild and healthful. All the moiſture which deſcends from the high grounds is collected in ſeveral lakes, the two largeſt of which, of about ninety miles in circuit, communicate with each other. The waters of the one are freſh, thoſe of the others brackiſh. On the banks of the latter, and on ſome ſmall iſlands adjoining to them, the capital of Montezuma's empire was built. The acceſs to the city was by artificial cauſeways or ſtreets, formed of ſtones and earth, about thirty feet in breadth. As the waters of the lake during the rainy ſeaſon overflowed the flat country, theſe cauſeways were of conſiderable length. That of Tacuba on the weſt extended a mile and a half; that of Tezeuco on the north-weſt three miles; that of Cuoyacan towards the ſouth ſix miles. On the eaſt there was no cauſeway, and the city could be approached only by canoes [u]. In each of theſe cauſeways were openings at proper intervals, through which the waters flowed; and over theſe beams of timber were laid, which being covered with earth, the cauſeway or ſtreet had everywhere an uniform appearance. As the approaches to the city were ſingular, its conſtruction was remarkable. Not only the temples of their gods, but the houſes belonging to the monarch, and to perſons of diſtinction, were of ſuch dimenſions, that, in compariſon with any other buildings which had been diſcovered in America, they might be termed magnificent. The habitati-

[u] F. Torribio MS.

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ons of the common people were mean, reſembling the huts of other Indians. But they were all placed in a regular manner, on the banks of the canals which paſſed through the city, in ſome of its diſtricts, or on the ſides of the ſtreets which interſected it in other quarters. In ſeveral places were large openings or ſquares, one of which, allotted for the great market, is ſaid to have been ſo ſpacious, that forty or fifty thouſand perſons carried on traffic there. In this city, the pride of the New World, and the nobleſt monument of the induſtry and art of man, while unacquainted with the uſe of iron, and deſtitute of aid from any domeſtic animal, the Spaniards who are moſt moderate in their computations, reckon that there were at leaſt ſixty thouſand inhabitants [x].

Their dangerous ſituation.

But how much ſoever the novelty of thoſe objects might amuſe or aſtoniſh the Spaniards, they felt the utmoſt ſolicitude with reſpect to their own ſituation. From a concurrence of circumſtances, no leſs unexpected than favourable to their progreſs, they had been allowed to penetrate into the heart of a powerful kingdom, and were now lodged in its capital, without having once met with open oppoſition from its monarch. The Tlaſcalans, however, had earneſtly diſſuaded them from placing ſuch confidence in Montezuma as to enter a city of ſuch a peculiar ſituation as Mexico, where that prince would have them at mercy, ſhut up as it were in a ſnare, from which it was impoſſible to eſcape. They aſſured him that the Mexican prieſts had, in the name of the Gods, counſelled their ſovereign to admit the Spaniards into the capital, that

[x] Cortes Relat. Ram. iii. 239. D. Relat. della gran cittá de Mexico, par un Gentelſhuomo del Corteſe. Ram. ibid. 304. E. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. vii. c. 14, &c.

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he might cut them off there at one blow with perfect ſecurity [y]. They now perceived, too plainly, that the apprehenſions of their allies were not deſtitute of foundation; that, by breaking the bridges placed at certain intervals on the cauſeways, or by deſtroying part of the cauſeways themſelves, their retreat would be rendered impracticable, and they muſt remain cooped up in the centre of a hoſtile city, ſurrounded by multitudes ſufficient to overwhelm them, and without a poſſibility of receiving aid from their allies. Montezuma had, indeed, received them with diſtinguiſhed reſpect. But ought they to reckon upon this as real, or to conſider it as feigned? Even if it were ſincere, could they promiſe on its continuance? Their ſafety depended upon the will of a monarch in whoſe attachment they had no reaſon to confide; and an order flowing from his caprice, or a word uttered by him in paſſion, might decide irrevocably concerning their fate [z].

Solicitude and perplexity of Cortes.

THESE reflections, ſo obvious as to occur to the meaneſt ſoldier, did not eſcape the vigilant ſagacity of their general. Before he ſet out from Cholula, Cortes had received advice from Villa Rica [a], that Qualpopoca, one of the Mexican generals on the frontiers, having aſſembled an army in order to attack ſome of the people whom the Spaniards had encouraged to throw off the Mexican yoke, Eſcalante had marched out with part of the garriſon to ſupport his allies; that an engagement had enſued, in which, though the Spaniards were victorious, Eſcalante, with ſeven of his men, had been mortally wounded, his horſe killed, and one Spaniard had been ſurrounded by the enemy and taken alive; that the head of this unfortunate captive, after be-

[y] B. Diaz. c. 85, 86. [z] Ibid. c. 94. [a] Cortes Relat. Ram. iii. 235. C.

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ing carried in triumph to different cities, in order to convince the people that their invaders were not immortal, had been ſent to Mexico [b]. Cortes, though alarmed with this intelligence, as an indication of Montezuma's hoſtile intentions, had continued his march. But as ſoon as he entered Mexico, he became ſenſible, that, from an exceſs of confidence in the ſuperior valour and diſcipline of his troops, as well as from the diſadvantage of having nothing to guide him in an unknown country, but the defective intelligence which he received from people with whom his mode of communication was very imperfect, he had puſhed forward into a ſituation, where it was difficult to continue, and from which it was dangerous to retire. Diſgrace, and perhaps ruin, was the certain conſequence of attempting the latter. The ſucceſs of his enterpriſe depended upon ſupporting the high opinion which the people of New Spain had formed with reſpect to the irreſiſtible power of his arms. Upon the firſt ſymptom of timidity on his part, their veneration would ceaſe, and Montezuma, whom fear alone reſtrained at preſent, would let looſe upon him the whole force of his empire. At the ſame time, he knew that the countenance of his own ſovereign was to be obtained only by a ſeries of victories, and that nothing but the merit of extraordinary ſucceſs could ſcreen his conduct from the cenſure of irregularity. From all theſe conſiderations, it was neceſſary to maintain his ſtation, and to extricate himſelf out of the difficulties in which one bold ſtep had involved him, by venturing upon another ſtill bolder. The ſituation was trying, but his mind was equal to it; and after revolving the matter with deep attention, he fixed upon a plan no leſs extraordinary than daring. He determined to ſeize

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[b] B. Diaz. c. 93, 94. Herrera, dec. 2. lib viii. c. 1.

Montezuma

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Montezuma in his palace, and to carry him as a priſoner to the Spaniſh quarters. From the ſuperſtitious veneration of the Mexicans for the perſon of their monarch, as well as their implicit ſubmiſſion to his will, he hoped, by having Montezuma in his power, to acquire the ſupreme direction of their affairs; or at leaſt, with ſuch a ſacred pledge in his hands, he made no doubt of being ſecure from any effort of their violence.

1519. Reſolves to ſeize Montezuma.

His manner of executing this.

THIS he immediately propoſed to his officers. The timid ſtartled at a meaſure ſo audacious, and raiſed objections. The more intelligent and reſolute, conſcious that it was the only reſource in which there appeared any proſpect of ſafety, warmly approved of it, and brought over their companions ſo cordially to the ſame opinion, that it was agreed inſtantly to make the attempt. At his uſual hour of viſiting Montezuma, Cortes went to the palace, accompanied by Alvarado, Sandoval, Lugo, Velaſquez de Leon, and Davila, five of his principal officers, and as many truſty ſoldiers. Thirty choſen men followed, not in regular order, but ſauntering at ſome diſtance, as if they had no object but curioſity; ſmall parties were poſted at proper intervals, in all the ſtreets leading from the Spaniſh quarters to the court; and the remainder of his troops, with the Tlaſcalan allies, were under arms, ready to ſally out on the firſt alarm. Cortes and his attendants were admitted without ſuſpicion; the Mexicans retiring, as uſual, out of reſpect. He addreſſed the monarch in a tone very different from that which he had employed in former conferences, reproaching him bitterly as the author of the violent aſſault made upon the Spaniards by one of his officers, and demanded public reparation for the loſs which he had ſuſtained by the death of ſome of his companions,

companions, as well as for the inſult offered to the great prince whoſe ſervants they were. Montezuma, confounded at this unexpected accuſation, and changing colour either from conſciouſneſs of guilt, or from feeling the indignity with which he was treated, aſſerted his own innocence with great earneſtneſs, and as a proof of it, gave orders inſtantly to bring Qualpopoca and his accomplices priſoners to Mexico. Cortes replied, with ſeeming complaiſance, that a declaration ſo reſpectable left no doubt remaining in his own mind, but that ſomething more was requiſite to ſatisfy his followers, who would never be convinced that Montezuma did not harbour hoſtile intentions againſt them, unleſs, as an evidence of his confidence and attachment, he removed from his own palace, and took up his reſidence in the Spaniſh quarters, where he ſhould be ſerved and honoured as became a great monarch. The firſt mention of ſo ſtrange a propoſal bereaved Montezuma of ſpeech, and almoſt of motion. At length, indignation gave him utterance, and he haughtily anſwered, "That perſons of his rank were not accuſtomed voluntarily to give up themſelves as priſoners, and were he mean enough to do ſo, his ſubjects would not permit ſuch an affront to be offered to their ſovereign." Cortes, unwilling to employ force, endeavoured alternately to ſoothe and to intimidate him. The altercation became warm; and having continued above three hours, Velaſquez de Leon, an impetuous and gallant young man, exclaimed with impatience, "Why waſte more time in vain? Let us either ſeize him inſtantly, or ſtab him to the heart." The threatening voice and fierce geſtures with which theſe words were uttered, ſtruck Montezuma. The Spaniards, he was ſenſible, had now proceeded ſo far, as left him no hope that they would recede. His own danger was imminent, the neceſſity unavoidable.

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avoidable. He ſaw both, and abandoning himſelf to his fate, complied with their requeſt.

1519. Montezuma carried to the Spaniſh quarters.

His officers were called. He communicated to them his reſolution. Though aſtoniſhed and afflicted, they preſumed not to queſtion the will of their maſter, but carried him in ſilent pomp, all bathed in tears, to the Spaniſh quarters. When it was known that the ſtrangers were conveying away the emperor, the people broke out into the wildeſt tranſports of grief and rage, threatening the Spaniards with immediate deſtruction, as the puniſhment juſtly due to their impious audacity. But as ſoon as Montezuma appeared with a ſeeming gaiety of countenance, and waved his hand, the tumult was huſhed, and upon his declaring it to be of his own choice that he went to reſide for ſome time among his new friends, the multitude, taught to revere every intimation of their ſovereign's pleaſure, quietly diſperſed [c].

Thus was a powerful prince ſeized by a few ſtrangers, in the midſt of his capital, at noon-day, and carried off as a priſoner without oppoſition or bloodſhed. Hiſtory contains nothing parallel to this event, either with reſpect to the temerity of the attempt, or the ſucceſs of the execution; and were not all the circumſtances of this extraordinary tranſaction authenticated by the moſt unqueſtionable evidence, they would appear ſo wild and extravagant, as to go far beyond the bounds of that veriſimilitude which muſt be preſerved even in fictitious narrations.

[c] B. Diaz. c. 95. Gomara Cron. c. 83. Cortes Relat. Ram. iii. p. 235, 236. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. viii. c. 2, 3.

Montezuma

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MONTEZUMA was received in the Spaniſh quarters with all the ceremonious reſpect which Cortes had promiſed. He was attended by his own domeſtics, and ſerved with his uſual ſtate. His principal officers had free acceſs to him, and he carried on all the functions of government, as if he had been at perfect liberty. The Spaniards, however, watched him with all the ſcrupulous vigilance natural in guarding ſuch an important prize [d], endeavouring at the ſame time to ſoothe and reconcile him to his ſituation, by every external demonſtration of regard and attachment. But from captive princes the hour of humiliation and ſuffering is never far diſtant. Qualpopoca, his ſon, and five of the principal officers who ſerved under him, were brought priſoners to the capital, in conſequence of the orders which Montezuma had iſſued. The emperor gave them up to Cortes, that he might inquire into the nature of their crime, and determine their puniſhment. They were formally tried by a Spaniſh court-martial; and though they had acted no other part than what became loyal ſubjects and brave men, in obeying the orders of their lawful ſovereign, and in oppoſing the invaders of their country, they were condemned to be burnt alive. The execution of ſuch atrocious deeds is ſeldom long ſuſpended. The unhappy victims were inſtantly led forth. The pile on which they were laid was compoſed of the weapons collected in the royal magazine for the public defence. An innumerable multitude of Mexicans beheld, in ſilent aſtoniſhment, the double inſult offered to the majeſty of their empire: an officer of diſtinction committed to the flames by the authority of ſtrangers, for having done what he owed in duty to his natural ſovereign; and the

Received with apparent reſpect.

Subjected to cruel indignities.

Dec. 4.

[d] See NOTE LXXXII.

arms

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arms provided by the foreſight of their anceſtors for avenging ſuch wrongs, conſumed before their eyes.

But theſe were not the moſt ſhocking indignities which they had to bear. Cortes, convinced that Qualpopoca would not have ventured to attack Eſcalante without orders from his maſter, was not ſatisfied with inflicting vengeance on the inſtrument employed in committing that crime, while the author of it eſcaped with impunity. Juſt before Qualpopoca was led out to ſuffer, Cortes entered the apartment of Montezuma, followed by ſome of his officers, and a ſoldier carrying a pair of fetters; and approaching the monarch with a ſtern countenance, told him, that as the perſons who were now to undergo the puniſhment which they merited, had charged him as the cauſe of the outrage committed, it was neceſſary that he likewiſe ſhould make atonement for that guilt; then turning away abruptly, without waiting for a reply, commanded the ſoldiers to clap the fetters on his legs. The orders were inſtantly executed. The diſconſolate monarch, trained up with an idea that his perſon was ſacred and inviolable, and conſidering this profanation of it as the prelude of immediate death, broke out into loud lamentations and complaints. His attendants, ſpeechleſs with horror, fell at his feet, bathing them with their tears; and bearing up the fetters in their hands, endeavoured with officious tenderneſs to lighten their preſſure. Nor did their grief and deſpondency abate, until Cortes returned from the execution with a cheerful countenance, and ordered the fetters to be taken off. As Montezuma's ſpirits had ſunk with unmanly dejection, they now roſe into indecent joy; and with an unbecoming tranſition, he paſſed at once from the anguiſh of deſpair to tranſports

tranſports of gratitude and fondneſs towards his deliverers.

1519. Reaſons of Cortes's conduct.

In thoſe tranſactions, as repreſented by the Spaniſh hiſtorians, we ſearch in vain for the qualities which diſtinguiſh other parts of Cortes's conduct. To uſurp a juriſdiction which could not belong to a ſtranger, who aſſumed no higher character than that of an ambaſſador from a foreign prince, and, under colour of it, to inflict a capital puniſhment on men whoſe conduct entitled them to eſteem, appears an act of barbarous cruelty. To put the monarch of a great kingdom in irons, and after ſuch ignominious treatment, ſuddenly to releaſe him, ſeems to be a diſplay of power no leſs inconſiderate than wanton. According to their repreſentation, no account can be given either of the one action or the other, but that Cortes, intoxicated with ſucceſs, and preſuming on the aſcendant which he had acquired over the minds of the Mexicans, thought nothing too bold for him to undertake, or too dangerous to execute. But, in one view, theſe proceedings, however repugnant to juſtice and humanity, may have flowed from that artful policy which regulated every part of Cortes's behaviour. The Mexicans had conceived the Spaniards to be an order of beings ſuperior to men. It was of the utmoſt conſequence to cheriſh this illuſion, and to keep up the veneration it inſpired. Cortes wiſhed that ſhedding the blood of a Spaniard ſhould be deemed the moſt heinous of all crimes; and nothing appeared better calculated to eſtabliſh this opinion, than to condemn the firſt Mexicans who had ventured to commit it, to a cruel death, and to oblige their monarch himſelf to ſubmit to a mortifying indignity, as an expiation for being acceſſary to their guilt [e].

[e] See NOTE LXXXIII.

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1519. The power which Cortes acquired. 1520.

THE rigour with which Cortes puniſhed the unhappy perſons who firſt preſumed to lay violent hands upon his followers, ſeems accordingly to have made all the impreſſion that he deſired. The ſpirit of Montezuma was not only overawed, but ſubdued. During ſix months that Cortes remained in Mexico, the monarch continued in the Spaniſh quarters, with an appearance of as entire ſatisfaction and tranquillity, as if he had reſided there not from conſtraint, but through choice. His miniſters and officers attended him as uſual. He took cognizance of all affairs; every order was iſſued in his name. The external aſpect of government appearing the ſame, and all its ancient forms being ſcrupulouſly obſerved, the people were ſo little ſenſible of any change, that they obeyed the mandates of their monarch with the ſame ſubmiſſive reverence as ever. Such was the dread which both Montezuma and his ſubjects had of the Spaniards, or ſuch the veneration in which they held them, that no attempt was made to deliver their ſovereign from confinement; and though Cortes, relying on this aſcendant which he had acquired over their minds, permitted him not only to viſit his temples, but to make hunting excurſions beyond the lake, a guard of a few Spaniards carried with it ſuch terror as to intimidate the multitude, and ſecure the captive monarch [f].

THUS, by the fortunate temerity of Cortes in ſeizing Montezuma, the Spaniards at once ſecured to themſelves more extenſive authority in the Mexican empire than it was poſſible to have acquired in a long courſe of time by open force; and they exerciſed more abſolute ſway in the name of another than they could have done in their own. The

[f] Cortes Relat. p. 236. E. B. Diaz. c. 97, 98, 99.

arts

arts of poliſhed nations in ſubjecting ſuch as are leſs improved, have been nearly the ſame in every period. The ſyſtem of ſcreening a foreign uſurpation, under the ſanction of authority derived from the natural rulers of a country, the device of employing the magiſtrates and forms already eſtabliſhed as inſtruments to introduce a new dominion, of which we are apt to boaſt as ſublime refinements in policy peculiar to the preſent age, were inventions of a more early period, and had been tried with ſucceſs in the Weſt, long before they were practiſed in the Eaſt. 1520.

Uſe which he makes of it.

CORTES availed himſelf to the utmoſt of the power which he poſſeſſed by this means. He ſent ſome Spaniards, whom he judged beſt qualified for ſuch commiſſions, into different parts of the empire, accompanied by perſons of diſtinction, whom Montezuma appointed to attend them both as guides and protectors. They viſited moſt of the provinces, viewed their ſoil and productions, ſurveyed with particular care the diſtricts which yielded gold or ſilver, pitched upon ſeveral places as proper ſtations for future colonies, and endeavoured to prepare the minds of the people for ſubmitting to the Spaniſh yoke. While they were thus employed, Cortes, in the name and by the authorito of Montezuma, degraded ſome of the principal officers in the empire, whoſe abilities or independent ſpirit excited his jealouſy, and ſubſtituted in their place perſons leſs capable or more obſequious.

ONE thing ſtill was wanting to complete his ſecurity. He wiſhed to have ſuch command of the lake as might enſure a retreat, if, either from levity or diſguſt, the Mexicans ſhould take arms againſt him, and break down the bridges or cauſeways. This, too, his own addreſs, and the facility of Montezuma, enabled him to accompliſh.

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pliſh. Having frequently entertained his priſoner with pompous accounts of the European marine and art of navigation, he awakened his curioſity to ſee thoſe moving palaces that made their way through the water without oars. Under pretext of gratifying this deſire, Cortes perſuaded him to appoint ſome of his ſubjects to fetch part of the naval ſtores depoſited at Vera Cruz to Mexico, and to employ others in cutting down and preparing timber. With their aſſiſtance, the Spaniſh carpenters ſoon completed two brigantines, which afforded a frivolous amuſement to the monarch, and were conſidered by Cortes as a certain reſource, if he ſhould be obliged to retire.

Montezuma acknowledges himſelf a vaſſal of Spain.

ENCOURAGED by ſo many inſtances of the monarch's tame ſubmiſſion to his will, Cortes ventured to put it to a proof ſtill more trying. He urged Montezuma to acknowledge himſelf a vaſſal of the king of Caſtile, to hold his crown of him as ſuperior, and to ſubject his dominions to the payment of an annual tribute. With this requiſition, the laſt and moſt humbling that can be made to one poſſeſſed of ſovereign authority, Montezuma was ſo obſequious as to comply. He called together the chief men of his empire, and in a ſolemn harangue, reminding them of the traditions and prophecies which led them to expect the arrival of a people ſprung from the ſame ſtock with themſelves, in order to take poſſeſſion of the ſupreme power, he declared his belief that the Spaniards were this promiſed race; that therefore he recognized the right of their monarch to govern the Mexican empire, would lay his crown at his feet, and obey him as a tributary. While uttering theſe words, Montezuma diſcovered how deeply he was affected in making ſuch a ſacrifice. Tears and groans frequently interrupted his diſcourſe. Overawed and broken as his ſpirit was, it ſtill retained ſuch a

ſenſe

ſenſe of dignity, as to feel that pang which pierces the heart of princes when conſtrained to reſign independent power. The firſt mention of ſuch a reſolution ſtruck the aſſembly dumb with aſtoniſhment. This was followed by a ſullen murmur of ſorrow mingled with indignation, which indicated ſome violent eruption of rage to be near at hand. This Cortes foreſaw, and ſeaſonably interpoſed to prevent it, by declaring that his maſter had no intention to deprive Montezuma of the royal dignity, or to make any innovation upon the conſtitution and laws of the Mexican empire. This aſſurance, added to their dread of the Spaniſh power, and to the authority of their monarch's example, extorted a reluctant conſent from the aſſembly [g]. The act of ſubmiſſion and homage was executed with all the formalities which the Spaniards were pleaſed to preſcribe [h].

1520.

MONTEZUMA, at the deſire of Cortes, accompanied this profeſſion of fealty and homage with a magnificent preſent to his new ſovereign; and, after his example, his ſubjects brought in very liberal contributions. The Spaniards now collected all the treaſure which had been either voluntarily beſtowed upon them at different times by Montezuma, or had been extorted from his people under various pretexts; and having melted the gold and ſilver, the value of theſe, without including jewels and ornaments of various kinds, which were preſerved on account of their curious workmanſhip, amounted to ſix hundred thouſand *peſos*. The ſoldiers were impatient to have it divided, and Cortes complied with their deſire. A fifth of the whole was firſt ſet apart as the tax due to the king. Another fifth was allotted to Cortes, as commander in chief. The

The amount of the treaſure collected by the Spaniards.

Diviſion of it, and the diſcontent it occaſioned.

[g] See NOTE LXXXIV. [h] Cortes Relat. 238. D. B. Diaz. c. 101. Gomara Cron. c. 92. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. x. c. 4.

ſums

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ſums advanced by Velaſquez, by Cortes, and by ſome of the officers, towards defraying the expence of fitting out the armament, were then deducted. The remainder was divided among the army, including the garriſon of Vera Cruz, in proportion to their different ranks. After ſo many defalcations, the ſhare of a private man did not exceed a hundred peſos. This ſum fell ſo far below their ſanguine expectations, that ſome ſoldiers rejected it with ſcorn, and others murmured ſo loudly at this cruel diſappointment of their hopes, that it required all the addreſs of Cortes, and no ſmall exertion of his liberality, to appeaſe them. The complaints of the army were not altogether deſtitute of foundation. As the crown had contributed nothing towards the equipment or ſucceſs of the armament, it was not without regret that the ſoldiers beheld it ſweep away ſo great a proportion of the treaſure purchaſed by their blood and toil. What fell to the ſhare of their general appeared, according to the ideas of wealth in the ſixteenth century, an enormous ſum. Some of Cortes's favourites had ſecretly appropriated to their own uſe ſeveral ornaments of gold, which neither paid the royal fifth, nor were brought into account as part of the common ſtock. It was, however, ſo manifeſtly the intereſt of Cortes at this period to make a large remittance to the king, that it is highly probable thoſe concealments were not of great conſequence.

Reaſons why gold was found in ſuch ſmall quantity.

THE total ſum amaſſed by the Spaniards bears no proportion to the ideas which might be formed, either by reflecting on the deſcriptions given by hiſtorians of the ancient ſplendour of Mexico, or by conſidering the productions of its mines in modern times. But among the ancient Mexicans, gold and ſilver were not the ſtandards by which the worth

worth of other commodities was eſtimated; and deſtitute of the artificial value derived from this circumſtance, were no farther in requeſt than as they furniſhed materials for ornaments and trinkets. Theſe were either conſecrated to the gods in their temples, or were worn as marks of diſtinction by their princes and ſome of their moſt eminent chiefs. As the conſumption of the precious metals was inconſiderable, the demand for them was not ſuch as to put either the ingenuity or induſtry of the Mexicans on the ſtretch, in order to augment their ſtore. They were altogether unacquainted with the art of working the rich mines with which their country abounded. What gold they had was gathered in the beds of rivers, native, and ripened into a pure metallic ſtate [i]. The utmoſt effort of their labour in ſearch of it was to waſh the earth carried down by torrents from the mountains, and to pick out the grains of gold which ſubſided; and even this ſimple operation, according to the report of the perſons whom Cortes appointed to ſurvey the provinces where there was a proſpect of finding mines, they performed very unſkilfully [k]. From all thoſe cauſes, the whoſe maſs of gold in poſſeſſion of the Mexicans was not great. As ſilver is rarely found pure, and their art was too rude to conduct the proceſs for refining it in a proper manner, the quantity of this metal was ſtill leſs conſiderable [l]. Thus, though the Spaniards had exerted all the power which they poſſeſſed in Mexico, and often with indecent rapacity, in order to gratify their predominant paſſion, and though Montezuma had fondly exhauſted his ſtores, in hopes of ſatiating their thirſt for gold, the product of both, which probably included a great part of the bullion in the empire, did not riſe in value above what has been mentioned [m].

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[i] Cortes Relat. p. 236. F. B. Diaz. c. 102, 103. Gomara Cron. c. 90.

[k] B. Diaz. c. 103. [l] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ix. c. 4.

[m] See NOTE LXXXV.

BOOK V.

1520.

Montezuma inflexible with respect to religion.

But however pliant Montezuma might be in other matters, with respect to one point he was inflexible. Though Cortes often urged him, with the importunate zeal of a missionary, to renounce his false gods, and to embrace the Christian faith, he always rejected the proposition with horror. Superstition, among the Mexicans, was formed into such a regular and complete system, that its institutions naturally took fast hold of the mind; and while the rude tribes in other parts of America were easily induced to relinquish a few notions and rites, so loose and arbitrary as hardly to merit the name of a public religion, the Mexicans adhered tenaciously to their mode of worship, which, however barbarous, was accompanied with such order and solemnity as to render it the object of veneration. Cortes, finding all his attempts ineffectual to shake the constancy of Montezuma, was so much enraged at his obstinacy, that in a transport of zeal he led out his soldiers to throw down the idols in the great temple by force. But the priests taking arms in defence of their altars, and the people crowding with great ardour to support them, Cortes's prudence overruled his zeal, and induced him to desist from his rash attempt, after dislodging the idols from one of the shrines, and placing in their stead an image of the Virgin Mary [n].

Schemes of the Mexicans to destroy the Spaniards.

From that moment the Mexicans, who had permitted the imprisonment of their sovereign, and suffered the exactions of strangers without a struggle, began to meditate how they might expel or destroy the Spaniards, and thought themselves called upon to avenge their insulted deities. The priests and leading men held frequent consultations with Mon-

[n] See NOTE LXXXVI.

tezuma

tezuma for this purpoſe. But as it might prove fatal to the captive monarch to attempt either the one or the other by violence, he was willing to try more gentle means. Having called Cortes into his preſence, he obſerved that now, as all the purpoſes of his embaſſy were fully accompliſhed, the gods had declared their will, and the people ſignified their deſire that he and his followers ſhould inſtantly depart out of the empire. With this he required them to comply, or unavoidable deſtruction would fall ſuddenly on their heads. The tenor of this unexpected requiſition, as well as the determined tone in which it was uttered, left Cortes no room to doubt that it was the reſult of ſome deep ſcheme concerted between Montezuma and his ſubjects. He quickly perceived that he might derive more advantage from a ſeeming compliance with the monarch's inclination, than from an ill-timed attempt to change or to oppoſe it, and replied, with great compoſure, that he had already begun to prepare for returning to his own country; but as he had deſtroyed the veſſels in which he arrived, ſome time was requiſite for building other ſhips. This appeared reaſonable. A number of Mexicans were ſent to Vera Cruz to cut down timber, and ſome Spaniſh carpenters were appointed to ſuperintend the work. Cortes flattered himſelf that during this interval, he might either find means to avert the threatened danger, or receive ſuch reinforcements as would enable him to deſpiſe it. 1520.

Anxiety and danger of Cortes.

ALMOST nine months were elapſed ſince Portocarrero and Montejo had ſailed with his diſpatches to Spain; and he daily expected their return with a confirmation of his authority from the king. Without this, his condition was inſecure and precarious, and after all the great things which he had done, it might be his doom to bear the name and

BOOK V. 1520.

ſuffer the puniſhment of a traitor. Rapid and extenſive as his progreſs had been, he could not hope to complete the reduction of a great empire with ſo ſmall a body of men, which by this time the diſeaſes of the climate had conſiderably thinned; nor could he apply for recruits to the Spaniſh ſettlements in the iſlands until he received the royal approbation of his proceedings.

The arrival of a new armament.

WHILE he remained in this cruel ſituation, anxious about what was paſt, uncertain with reſpect to the future, and, by the late declaration of Montezuma, oppreſſed with a new addition of cares, a Mexican courier arrived with an account of ſome ſhips having appeared on the coaſt. Cortes, with fond credulity, imagining that his meſſengers were returned from Spain, and that the completion of all his wiſhes and hopes was at hand, imparted the glad tidings to his companions, who received them with tranſports of mutual gratulation. Their joy was not of long continuance. A courier from Sandoval, whom Cortes had appointed to ſucceed Eſcalante in command at Vera Cruz, brought certain information that the armament was fitted out by Velaſquez, governor of Cuba, and inſtead of bringing the aid which they expected, threatened them with immediate deſtruction.

Fitted out by Velaſquez.

THE motives which prompted Velaſquez to this violent meaſure are obvious. From the circumſtances of Cortes's departure, it was impoſſible not to ſuſpect his intention of throwing off all dependence upon him. His neglecting to tranſmit any account of his operations to Cuba, ſtrengthened this ſuſpicion, which was at laſt confirmed, beyond doubt, by the indiſcretion of the officers whom Cortes ſent to Spain. They, from ſome motive, which is not clearly explained by the contemporary hiſtorians,

1520.

ans, touched at the iſland of Cuba, contrary to the peremptory orders of their general [o]. By this means Velaſquez not only learned that Cortes and his followers, after formally renouncing all connection with him, had eſtabliſhed an independent colony in New Spain, and were ſoliciting the king to confirm their proceedings by his authority; but he obtained particular information concerning the opulence of the country, the valuable preſents which Cortes had received, and the inviting proſpects of ſucceſs that opened to his view. Every paſſion which can agitate an ambitious mind; ſhame, at having been ſo groſsly overreached; indignation, at being betrayed by the man whom he had ſelected as the object of his favour and confidence; grief, for having waſted his fortune to aggrandize an enemy; and deſpair of recovering ſo fair an opportunity of eſtabliſhing his fame and extending his power, now raged in the boſom of Velaſquez. All theſe, with united force, excited him to make an extraordinary effort in order to be avenged on the author of his wrongs, and to wreſt from him his uſurped authority and conqueſts. Nor did he want the appearance of a good title to juſtify ſuch an attempt. The agent whom he ſent to Spain with an account of Grijalva's voyage, had met with a moſt favourable reception; and from the ſpecimens which he produced, ſuch high expectations were formed concerning the opulence of New Spain, that Velaſquez was authoriſed to proſecute the diſcovery of the country, and appointed governor of it during life, with more extenſive power and privileges than had been granted to any adventurer from the time of Columbus [p]. Elated by this diſtinguiſhing mark of favour, and warranted to conſider Cortes not only as intruding upon his juriſdiction, but as diſo-

[o] B. Diaz. c. 54, 55. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. v. c. 14. Gomara Cron. c. 96.

[p] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iii. c. 11.

bedient

BOOK V.

1520. Under the command of Narvaez.

bedient to the royal mandate, he determined to vindicate his own rights and the honour of his ſovereign by force of arms [r]. His ardour in carrying on his preparations was ſuch as might have been expected from the violence of the paſſions with which he was animated; and in a ſhort time an armament was completed, conſiſting of eighteen ſhips, which had on board fourſcore horſe-men, eight hundred foot ſoldiers, of which eighty were muſketeers, and a hundred and twenty croſs-bow men, together with a train of twelve pieces of cannon. As Velaſquez's experience of the fatal conſequence of committing to another what he ought to have executed himſelf, had not rendered him more enterpriſing, he veſted the command of this formidable body, which, in the infancy of the Spaniſh power in America, merits the appellation of an army, in Pamphilo de Narvaez, with inſtructions to ſeize Cortes and his principal officers, to ſend them priſoners to him, and then to complete the diſcovery and conqueſt of the country in his name.

The proceedings of Narvaez. April.

AFTER a proſperous voyage, Narvaez landed his men without oppoſition near St. Juan de Ullua. Three ſoldiers, whom Cortes had ſent to ſearch for mines in that diſtrict, immediately joined him. By this accident, he not only received information concerning the progreſs and ſituation of Cortes, but as theſe ſoldiers had made ſome progreſs in the knowledge of the Mexican language, he acquired interpreters, by whoſe means he was enabled to hold ſome intercourſe with the people of the country. But, according to the low cunning of deſerters, they framed their intelligence with more attention to what they thought would be agreeable, than to what they knew to be true; and repreſented the

[r] See NOTE LXXXVII.

ſituation

ſituation of Cortes to be ſo deſperate, and the diſaffection of his followers to be ſo general, as increaſed the natural preſumption and confidence of Narvaez. His firſt operation, however, might have taught him not to rely on their partial accounts. Having ſent to ſummon the governor of Vera Cruz to ſurrender, Guevara, a prieſt whom he employed in that ſervice, made the requiſition with ſuch inſolence, that Sandoval, an officer of high ſpirit, and zealouſly attached to Cortes, inſtead of complying with his demands, ſeized him and his attendants, and ſent them in chains to Mexico. 1520.

Cortes deeply alarmed.

CORTES received them not like enemies, but as friends, and condemning the ſeverity of Sandoval, ſet them immediately at liberty. By this well-timed clemency, ſeconded by careſſes and preſents, he gained their confidence, and drew from them ſuch particulars concerning the force and intentions of Narvaez, as gave him a view of the impending danger in its full extent. He had not to contend now with half-naked Indians, no match for him in war, and ſtill more inferior in the arts of policy, but to take the field againſt an army in courage and martial diſcipline equal to his own, in number far ſuperior, acting under the ſanction of royal authority, and commanded by an officer of known bravery. He was informed that Narvaez, more ſolicitous to gratify the reſentment of Velaſquez, than attentive to the honour or intereſt of his country, had begun his intercourſe with the natives, by repreſenting him and his followers as fugitives and outlaws, guilty of rebellion againſt their own ſovereign, and of injuſtice in invading the Mexican empire, and had declared to them that his ſole object in viſiting the country was to puniſh the Spaniards, and to reſcue them from oppreſſion. He ſoon perceived

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ceived that the ſame unfavourable repreſentations had been conveyed to Montezuma, and that Narvaez had found means to aſſure him, that as the conduct of thoſe who kept him under reſtraint was highly diſpleaſing to the king his maſter, he had it in charge not only to reſcue an injured monarch from confinement, but to reinſtate him in the poſſeſſion of his ancient power and independence. Animated with this proſpect of being ſet free from ſubjection to ſtrangers, the provinces began openly to revolt from Cortes, and to regard Narvaez as a deliverer no leſs able than willing to ſave them. Montezuma himſelf kept up a ſecret intercourſe with the new commander, and ſeemed to court him as a perſon ſuperior in power and dignity to thoſe Spaniards whom he had hitherto revered as the firſt of men [s].

His deliberations concerning his own conduct.

SUCH were the various aſpects of danger and difficulty which preſented themſelves to the view of Cortes. No ſituation can be conceived more trying to the capacity and firmneſs of a general, or where the choice of the plan which ought to be adopted was more difficult. If he ſhould wait the approach of Narvaez in Mexico, deſtruction ſeemed to be unavoidable; for while the Spaniards preſſed him from without, the inhabitants, whoſe turbulent ſpirit he could hardly reſtrain with all his authority and attention, would eagerly lay hold on ſuch a favourable opportunity of avenging all their wrongs. If he ſhould abandon the capital, ſet the captive monarch at liberty, and march out to meet the enemy; he muſt at once forego the fruits of all his toils and victories, and relinquiſh advantages which could not be recovered without extraordinary efforts, and infinite danger. If, inſtead of employing force, he ſhould have

[s] See NOTE LXXXVIII.

recourſe

recourſe to conciliating meaſures, and attempt an accommodation with Narvaez; the natural haughtineſs of that officer, augmented by conſciouſneſs of his preſent ſuperiority, forbad him to cheriſh any ſanguine hope of ſucceſs. After revolving every ſcheme with deep attention, Cortes fixed upon that which, in execution was moſt hazardous, but, if ſucceſsful, would prove moſt beneficial to his country; and with the deciſive intrepidity, ſuited to deſperate ſituations, determined to make one bold effort for victory under every diſadvantage, rather than ſacrifice his own conqueſts and the Spaniſh intereſt in Mexico.

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His negociations with the followers of Narvaez.

But though he foreſaw that the conteſt muſt be terminated finally by arms, it would have been not only indecent, but criminal, to have marched againſt his countrymen, without attempting to adjuſt matters by an amicable negociation. In this ſervice he employed Olmedo, his chaplain, to whoſe character the function was well ſuited, and who poſſeſſed, beſides, ſuch prudence and addreſs as qualified him to carry on the ſecret intrigues in which Cortes placed his chief confidence. Narvaez rejected, with ſcorn, every ſcheme of accommodation that Olmedo propoſed, and was with difficulty reſtrained from laying violent hands on him and his attendants. He met, however, with a more favourable reception among his followers, to many of whom he delivered letters, either from Cortes or his officers, their ancient friends and companions. Cortes artfully accompanied theſe with preſent of rings, chains of gold, and other trinkets of value, which inſpired thoſe needy adventurers with high ideas of the wealth that he had acquired, and with envy of their good fortune who were engaged in his ſervice. Some, from hopes of becoming ſharers in thoſe rich ſpoils, declared

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clared for an immediate accommodation with Cortes. Others, from public ſpirit, laboured to prevent a civil war, which, whatever party ſhould prevail, muſt ſhake, and perhaps ſubvert the Spaniſh power, in a country where it was ſo imperfectly eſtabliſhed. Narvaez diſregarded both, and by a public proclamation denounced Cortes and his adherents rebels and enemies to their country. Cortes, it is probable, was not much ſurpriſed at the untractable arrogance of Narvaez; and, after having given ſuch a proof of his own pacific diſpoſition as might juſtify his recourſe to other means, he determined to advance towards an enemy whom he had laboured in vain to appeaſe.

Marches againſt him. May.

He left a hundred and fifty men in the capital, under the command of Pedro de Alvarado, an officer of diſtinguiſhed courage, for whom the Mexicans had conceived a ſingular degree of reſpect. To the cuſtody of this ſlender garriſon he committed a great city, with all the wealth he had amaſſed, and, what was ſtill of greater importance, the perſon of the impriſoned monarch. His utmoſt art was employed in concealing from Montezuma the real cauſe of his march. He laboured to perſuade him, that the ſtrangers who had lately arrived were his friends and fellow-ſubjects; and that, after a ſhort interview with them, they would depart together, and return to their own country. The captive prince, unable to comprehend the deſigns of the Spaniards, or to reconcile what he now heard with the declarations of Narvaez, and afraid to diſcover any ſymptom of ſuſpicion or diſtruſt of Cortes, promiſed to remain quietly in the Spaniſh quarters, and to cultivate the ſame friendſhip with Alvarado which he had uniformly maintained with him. Cortes, with ſeemimg confidence in this promiſe, but relying principally upon the injunctions which he had given Alvarado

to

to guard his priſoner with the moſt ſcrupulous vigilance, ſet out from Mexico.

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Number of his troops.

His ſtrength, even after it was reinforced by the junction of Sandoval and the garriſon of Vera Cruz, did not exceed two hundred and fifty men. As he hoped for ſucceſs chiefly from the rapidity of his motions, his troops were not encumbered either with baggage or artillery. But as he dreaded extremely the impreſſion which the enemy might make with their cavalry, he had provided againſt this danger with the foreſight and ſagacity which diſtinguiſh a great commander. Having obſerved that the Indians in the province of Chinantla uſed ſpears of extraordinary length and force, he armed his ſoldiers with theſe, and accuſtomed them to that deep and compact arrangement which the uſe of this formidable weapon, the beſt perhaps that ever was invented for defence, enabled them to aſſume.

Continues to negociate as he advanced.

With this ſmall but firm battalion, Cortes advanced towards Zempoalla, of which Narvaez had taken poſſeſſion. During his march, he made repeated attempts towards ſome accommodation with his opponent. But Narvaez requiring that Cortes and his followers ſhould inſtantly recognize his title to be governor of New Spain, in virtue of the powers which he derived from Velaſquez, and Cortes refuſing to ſubmit to any authority which was not founded on a commiſſion from the emperor himſelf, under whoſe immediate protection he and his adherents had placed their infant colony, all theſe attempts proved fruitleſs. The intercourſe, however, which this occaſioned between the two parties, proved of no ſmall advantage to Cortes, as it afforded him an opportunity of gaining ſome of Narvaez's officers by liberal preſents, of ſoftening others by a ſemblance of moderation, and of dazzling

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zling all by the appearance of wealth among his troops, moſt of his ſoldiers having converted their ſhare of the Mexican gold into chains, bracelets, and other ornaments, which they diſplayed with military oſtentation. Narvaez and a little junto of his creatures excepted, all the army leaned towards an accommodation with their countrymen. This diſcovery of their inclination irritated his violent temper almoſt to madneſs. In a tranſport of rage, he ſet a price upon the head of Cortes, and of his principal officers; and having learned that he was now advanced within a league of Zempoalla with his ſmall body of men, he conſidered this as an inſult which merited immediate chaſtiſement, and marched out with all his troops to offer him battle.

Attacks Narvaez in the night,

But Cortes was a leader of greater abilities and experience than to fight an enemy ſo far ſuperior in number, and ſo much better appointed, on equal ground. Having taken his ſtation on the oppoſite bank of the river de Canoas, where he knew that he could not be attacked, he beheld the approach of the enemy without concern, and diſregarded this vain bravade. It was then the beginning of the wet ſeaſon [t], and the rain had poured down, during a great part of the day, with the violence peculiar to the torrid zone. The followers of Narvaez, unaccuſtomed to the hardſhips of military ſervice, murmured ſo much at being thus fruitleſsly expoſed, that, from their unſoldier-like impatience, as well as his own contempt of his adverſary, their general permitted them to retire to Zempoalla. The very circumſtance which induced them to quit the field, encouraged Cortes to form a ſcheme, by which he hoped at once to terminate the war. He obſerved, that his hardy vete-

[t] Hackluyt. vol. iii. 467. De Laet Deſcr. Ind. Occid. 221.

rans,

rans, though ſtanding under the torrents, which continued to fall, without a ſingle tent or any ſhelter whatſoever to cover them, were ſo far from repining at hardſhips that were become familiar to them, that they were ſtill freſh and alert for ſervice. He foreſaw that the enemy would naturally give themſelves up to repoſe after their fatigue, and that, judging of the conduct of others by their own effeminacy, they would deem themſelves perfectly ſecure at a ſeaſon ſo unfit for action. He reſolved, therefore, to fall upon them in the dead of night, when the ſurpriſe and terror of this unexpected attack might more than compenſate the inferiority of his numbers. His ſoldiers, ſenſible that no reſource remained but in ſome deſperate effort of courage, approved of the meaſure with ſuch warmth, that Cortes, in a military oration which he addreſſed to them before they began their march, was more ſolicitous to temper than to inflame their ardour. He divided them into three parties. At the head of the firſt he placed Sandoval; entruſting this gallant officer with the moſt dangerous and important ſervice, that of ſeizing the enemy's artillery, which was planted before the principal tower of the temple, where Narvaez had fixed his headquarters. Chriſtoval de Olid commanded the ſecond, with orders to aſſault the tower, and lay hold on the general. Cortes himſelf conducted the third and ſmalleſt diviſion, which was to act as a body of reſerve, and to ſupport the other two as there ſhould be occaſion. Having paſſed the river de Canoas, which was much ſwelled with the rains, not without difficulty, the water reaching almoſt to their chins, they advanced in profound ſilence, without beat of drum, or ſound of any warlike inſtrument; each man armed with his ſword, his dagger, and his Chinantlan ſpear. Narvaez, remiſs in proportion to his ſecurity, had poſted only two centinels to watch the motions of an enemy whom

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whom he had ſuch good cauſe to dread. One of theſe was ſeized by the advanced guard of Cortes's troops, the other made his eſcape, and hurrying to the town with all the precipitation of fear and zeal, gave ſuch timely notice of the enemy's approach, that there was full leiſure to have prepared for their reception. But, through the arrogance and infatuation of Narvaez, this important interval was loſt. He imputed this alarm to the cowardice of the centinel, and treated with deriſion the idea of being attacked by forces ſo unequal to his own. The ſhouts of Cortes's ſoldiers, ruſhing on to the aſſault, convinced him at laſt, that the danger which he deſpiſed was real. The rapidity with which they advanced was ſuch, that only one cannon could be fired, before Sandoval's party cloſed with the enemy, drove them from their guns, and began to force their way up the ſteps of the tower. Narvaez, no leſs brave in action than preſumptuous in conduct, armed himſelf in haſte, and by his voice and example animated his men to the combat. Olid advanced to ſuſtain his companions; and Cortes himſelf, ruſhing to the front, conducted and added new vigour to the attack. The compact order in which this ſmall body preſſed on, and the impenetrable front which they preſented with their long ſpears, bore down all oppoſition before it. They had now reached the gate, and were ſtruggling to burſt it open, when a ſoldier having ſet fire to the reeds with which the tower was covered, compelled Narvaez to ſally out. In the firſt encounter he was wounded in the eye with a ſpear, and falling to the ground, was dragged down the ſteps, and in a moment clapt in fetters. The cry of victory reſounded among the troops of Cortes. Thoſe who had ſallied out with their leader now maintained the conflict feebly, or began to ſurrender. Among the remainder of his ſoldiers, ſtationed in two ſmaller towers of the temple,

and overcomes him.

temple, terror and confuſion prevailed. The darkneſs was ſo great, that they could not diſtinguiſh between their friends and foes. Their own artillery was pointed againſt them. Wherever they turned their eyes, they beheld lights gleaming through the obſcurity of night, which, though proceeding only from a variety of ſhining inſects, that abound in moiſt and ſultry climates, their affrighted imaginations repreſented as numerous bands of muſketeers advancing with kindled matches to the attack. After a ſhort reſiſtance, the ſoldiers compelled their officers to capitulate, and before morning all laid down their arms, and ſubmitted quietly to their conquerors. BOOK V. 1520.

THIS complete victory proved more acceptable, as it was gained almoſt without bloodſhed, only two ſoldiers being killed on the ſide of Cortes, and two officers, with fifteen private men, of the adverſe faction. Cortes treated the vanquiſhed not like enemies, but as countrymen and friends, and offered either to ſend them back directly to Cuba, or to take them into his ſervice, as partners in his fortune, on equal terms with his own ſoldiers. This latter propoſition, ſeconded by a ſeaſonable diſtribution of ſome preſents from Cortes, and liberal promiſes of more, opened proſpects ſo agreeable to the romantic expectations which had induced them to engage in this ſervice, that all, a few partizans of Narvaez excepted, cloſed with it, and vied with each other in profeſſions of fidelity and attachment to a general whoſe recent ſucceſs had given them ſuch a ſtriking proof of his abilities for command. Thus, by a ſeries of events no leſs fortunate than uncommon, Cortes not only eſcaped from perdition which ſeemed inevitable, but, when he had leaſt reaſon to expect it, was placed at the head of a thouſand Spaniards, ready to follow wherever he ſhould lead them. Whoever reflects upon the facility The effects of this victory.

BOOK V. 1520.

cility with which this victory was obtained, or conſiders with what ſudden and unanimous tranſition on the followers of Narvaez ranged themſelves under the ſtandard of his rival, will be apt to aſcribe both events as much to the intrigues as to the arms of Cortes, and cannot but ſuſpect that the ruin of Narvaez was occaſioned, no leſs by the treachery of his own followers, than by the valour of his enemy [u].

The Mexicans take arms againſt the Spaniards.

But, in one point, the prudent conduct and good fortune of Cortes were equally conſpicuous. If, by the rapidity of his operations after he began his march, he had not brought matters to ſuch a ſpeedy iſſue, even this deciſive victory would have come too late to have ſaved his companions whom he left in Mexico. A few days after the diſcomfiture of Narvaez, a courier arrived with an account that the Mexicans had taken arms, and having ſeized and deſtroyed the two brigantines, which he had built in order to ſecure the command of the lake, had attacked the Spaniards in their quarters, had killed ſeveral of them and wounded more, had reduced to aſhes their magazine of proviſions, and carried on hoſtilities with ſuch fury, that, though Alvarado and his men defended themſelves with undaunted reſolution, they muſt either be ſoon cut off by famine, or ſink under the multitude of their enemies. This revolt was excited by motives which rendered it ſtill more alarming. On the departure of Cortes for Zempoalla, the Mexicans flattered themſelves, that the long-expected opportunity of reſtoring their ſovereign to liberty, and of vindicating their country from the odious dominion of ſtrangers, was at length arrived; that while the forces of their oppreſſors were divided, and the arms

[u] Cortes Relat. 242. D. B. Diaz. c. 110.—125. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ix. c. 18, &c. Gomara Cron. c. 97, &c.

of

of one party turned againſt the other, they might triumph with greater facility over both. Conſultations were held, and ſchemes formed with this intention. The Spaniards in Mexico, conſcious of their own feebleneſs, ſuſpected and dreaded thoſe machinations. Alvarado, though a gallant officer, poſſeſſed neither that extent of capacity, nor dignity of manners, by which Cortes had acquired ſuch an aſcendant over the minds of the Mexicans, as never allowed them to form a juſt eſtimate of his weakneſs or of their own ſtrength. Alvarado knew no mode of ſupporting his authority but force. Inſtead of employing addreſs to diſconcert the plans or to ſoothe the ſpirits of the Mexicans, he waited the return of one of their ſolemn feſtivals, when the principal perſons in the empire were dancing, according to cuſtom, in the court of the great temple; he ſeized all the avenues which led to it, and, allured partly by the rich ornaments which they wore in honour of their gods, and partly by the facility of cutting off at once the authors of that conſpiracy which he dreaded, he fell upon them, unarmed and unſuſpicious of any danger, and maſſacred a great number, none eſcaping but ſuch as made their way over the battlements of the temple. An action ſo cruel and treacherous filled not only the city, but the whole empire, with indignation and rage. All called aloud for vengeance; and regardleſs of the ſafety of their monarch, whoſe life was at the mercy of the Spaniards, or of their own danger in aſſaulting an enemy who had been ſo long the object of their terror, they committed all thoſe acts of violence of which Cortes received an account.

BOOK V. 1520.

To him the danger appeared ſo imminent, as to admit neither of deliberation nor delay. He ſet out inſtantly with all his forces, and returned from Zempoalla with no leſs rapidity than he had advanc-

He marches back to the capital.

BOOK V.

ed thither. At Tlaſcala he was joined by two thouſand choſen warriors. On entering the Mexican territories, he found that diſaffection to the Spaniards was not confined to the capital. The principal inhabitants had deſerted the towns through which he paſſed; no perſon of note appearing to meet him with the uſual reſpect; no proviſion was made for the ſubſiſtence of his troops; and though he was permitted to advance without oppoſition, the ſolitude and ſilence which reigned in every place, and the horror with which the people avoided all intercourſe with him, diſcovered a deep-rooted antipathy, that excited the moſt juſt alarm. But, implacable as the enmity of the Mexicans was, they were ſo unacquainted with the ſcience of war, that they knew not how to take the proper meaſures, either for their own ſafety or the deſtruction of the Spaniards. Uninſtructed by their former error in admitting a formidable enemy into their capital, inſtead of breaking down the cauſeways and bridges, by which they might have incloſed Alvarado and his party, and have effectually ſtopt the career of Cortes, they again ſuffered him to march into the city without moleſtation, and to take quite poſſeſſion of his ancient ſtation.

1520.

June 24.

Improper conduct of Cortes.

THE tranſports of joy with which Alvarado and his ſoldiers received their companions cannot be expreſſed. Both parties were ſo much elated, the one with their ſeaſonable deliverance, and the other with the great exploits which they had atchieved, that this intoxication of ſucceſs ſeems to have ſo far reached Cortes himſelf that he behaved on this occaſion neither with his uſual ſagacity nor attention. He not only neglected to viſit Montezuma, but embittered the inſult by expreſſions full of contempt for that unfortunate prince and his people. The forces

forces of which he had now the command, appeared to him ſo irreſiſtible, that he might aſſume an higher tone, and lay aſide the maſk of moderation, under which he had hitherto concealed his deſigns. Some Mexicans who underſtood the Spaniſh language, heard the contemptuous words which Cortes uttered, and reporting them to their countrymen, kindled their rage anew. They were now convinced that the intentions of the general were equally bloody with thoſe of Alvarado, and that his original purpoſe in viſiting their country, had not been, as he pretended, to court the alliance of their ſovereign, but to attempt the conqueſt of his dominions. They reſumed their arms with the additional fury which this diſcovery inſpired, attacked a conſiderable body of Spaniards who were marching towards the great ſquare in which the public market was held, and compelled them to retire with ſome loſs. Emboldened by this ſucceſs, and delighted to find that their oppreſſors were not invincible, they advanced next day with extraordinary martial pomp to aſſault the Spaniards in their quarters. Their number was formidable, and their undaunted courage ſtill more ſo. Though the artillery pointed againſt their numerous battalions, crouded together in narrow ſtreets, ſwept off multitudes at every diſcharge; though every blow of the Spaniſh weapons fell with mortal effect upon their naked bodies, the impetuoſity of the aſſault did not abate. Freſh men ruſhed forward to occupy the places of the ſlain, and meeting with the ſame fate, were ſucceeded by others no leſs intrepid and eager on vengeance. The utmoſt efforts of Cortes's abilities and experience, ſeconded by the diſciplined valour of his troops, were hardly ſufficient to defend their fortifications, into which the enemy were more than once on the point of forcing their way.

1520.

The violent hoſtility of the Mexicans.

BOOK V.

1520. Diſtreſs of the Spaniards.

CORTES beheld, with wonder, the implacable ferocity of a people, who ſeemed at firſt to ſubmit tamely to the yoke, and had continued ſo long paſſive under it. The ſoldiers of Narvaez, who fondly imagined that they followed Cortes to ſhare in the ſpoils of a conquered empire, were aſtoniſhed to find that they were involved in a dangerous war, with an enemy whoſe vigour was ſtill unbroken, and loudly execrated their own weakneſs, in giving ſuch eaſy credit to the deluſive promiſes of their new leader [x]. But ſurpriſe and complaints were of no avail. Some immediate and extraordinary effort was requiſite to extricate themſelves out of their preſent ſituation. As ſoon as the approach of evening induced the Mexicans to retire, in compliance with their national cuſtom of ceaſing from hoſtilities with the ſetting ſun, Cortes began to prepare for a ſally, with ſuch a conſiderable force, as might either drive the enemy out of the city, or compel them to liſten to terms of accommodation.

Cortes attacks them without ſucceſs.

HE conducted, in perſon, the troops deſtined for this important ſervice. Every invention known in the European art of war, as well as every precaution, ſuggeſted by his long acquaintance with the Indian mode of fighting, were employed to enſure ſucceſs. But he found an enemy prepared and determined to oppoſe him. The force of the Mexicans was greatly augmented by freſh troops, which poured in continually from the country, and their animoſity was in no degree abated. They were led by their nobles, inflamed by the exhortations of their prieſts, and fought in defence of their temples and families, under the eye of their gods, and in preſence of their wives and children. Not-

[x] B. Diaz. c. 126.

withſtanding

withſtanding their numbers, and enthuſiaſtic contempt of danger and death, wherever the Spaniards could cloſe with them, the ſuperiority of their diſcipline and arms obliged them to give way. But in narrow ſtreets, and where many of the bridges of communication were broken down, they could ſeldom come to a fair rencounter, and the Spaniards, as they advanced, were expoſed to ſhowers of arrows and ſtones from the tops of the houſes. After a day of inceſſant exertion, though vaſt numbers of the Mexicans fell, and part of the city was burnt, the Spaniards, weary with the ſlaughter, and haraſſed by multitudes which ſucceſſively relieved each other, were obliged at length to retire, with the mortification of having accompliſhed nothing ſo deciſive as to compenſate the unuſual calamity of twelve ſoldiers killed, and above ſixty wounded. Another ſally, made with greater force, was not more effectual, and in it the general himſelf was wounded in the hand.

1520.

Montezuma ſlain.

CORTES now perceived, too late, the fatal error into which he had been betrayed by his own contempt of the Mexicans, and was ſatisfied that he could neither maintain his preſent ſtation in the centre of an hoſtile city, nor retire from it without the moſt imminent danger. One reſource ſtill remained, to try what effect the interpoſition of Montezuma might have to ſoothe or overawe his ſubjects. When the Mexicans approached next morning to renew the aſſault, that unfortunate prince, at the mercy of the Spaniards, and reduced to the ſad neceſſity of becoming the inſtrument of his own diſgrace, and of the ſlavery of his people [y], advanced to the battlements in his royal robes, and with all

[y] See NOTE LXXXIX.

the

BOOK V. 1520.

the pomp in which he uſed to appear on ſolemn occaſions. At ſight of their ſovereign, whom they had long been accuſtomed to honour and almoſt to revere as a god, the weapons dropt from their hands, every tongue was ſilent, all bowed their heads, and many proſtrated themſelves on the ground. Montezuma addreſſed them with every argument that could mitigate their rage, or perſuade them to ceaſe from hoſtilities. When he ended his diſcourſe, a ſullen murmur of diſapprobation run through the croud; to this ſucceeded reproaches and threats; and their fury riſing in a moment above every reſtraint of decency or reſpect, flights of arrows and volleys of ſtones poured in ſo violently upon the ramparts, that before the Spaniſh ſoldiers, appointed to cover Montezuma with their bucklers, had time to lift them in his defence, two arrows wounded the unhappy monarch, and the blow of a ſtone on his temple ſtruck him to the ground. On ſeeing him fall, the Mexicans were ſo much aſtoniſhed, that, with a tranſition not uncommon in popular tumults, they paſſed in a moment from one extreme to the other, remorſe ſucceeded to inſult, and they fled with horror, as if the vengeance of Heaven were purſuing the crime which they had committed. The Spaniards, without moleſtation, carried Montezuma to his apartments, and Cortes haſtened thither to conſole him under his misfortune. But the unhappy monarch now perceived how low he was ſunk, and the haughty ſpirit which ſeemed to have been ſo long extinct, returning, he ſcorned to ſurvive this laſt humiliation, and to protract an ignominious life, not only as the priſoner and tool of his enemies, but as the object of contempt or deteſtation among his ſubjects. In a tranſport of rage he tore the bandages from his wounds, and refuſed, with ſuch obſtinacy, to take any nouriſhment, that he ſoon ended

ed his wretched days, rejecting with diſdain all the ſolicitations of the Spaniards to embrace the Chriſtian faith. BOOK V. 1520.

UPON the death of Montezuma, Cortes having loſt all hope of bringing the Mexicans to any accommodation, ſaw no proſpect of ſafety but in attempting a retreat, and began to prepare for it. But a ſudden motion of the Mexicans engaged him in new conflicts. They took poſſeſſion of a high tower in the great temple which overlooked the Spaniſh quarters, and placing there a garriſon of their principal warriors, not a Spaniard could ſtir without being expoſed to their miſſile weapons. From this poſt it was neceſſary to diſlodge them at any riſk, and Juan de Eſcobar, with a numerous detachment of choſen ſoldiers, was ordered to make the attack. But Eſcobar, though a gallant officer, and at the head of troops accuſtomed to conquer, and who now fought under the eyes of their countrymen, was thrice repulſed. Cortes, ſenſible that not only the reputation but the ſafety of his army depended on the ſucceſs of this aſſault, ordered a buckler to be tied to his arm, as he could not manage it with his wounded hand, and ruſhed with his drawn ſword into the thickeſt of the combatants. Encouraged by the preſence of their general, the Spaniards returned to the charge with ſuch vigour, that they gradually forced their way up the ſteps, and drove the Mexicans to the platform at the top of the tower. There a dreadful carnage began, when two young Mexicans of high rank, obſerving Cortes as he animated his ſoldiers by his voice and example, reſolved to ſacrifice their own lives in order to cut off the author of all the calamities which deſolated their country. They approached him in a ſupplicant poſture, as if they had intended to lay down their arms, and ſeizing him in a moment, hurried

New conflicts.

BOOK V. 1520.

ried him towards the battlements, over which they threw themſelves headlong, in hopes of dragging him along to be daſhed in pieces by the ſame fall. But Cortes, by his ſtrength and agility, broke looſe from their graſp, and the gallant youths periſhed in this generous, though unſucceſsful, attempt to ſave their country. As ſoon as the Spaniards became maſters of the tower, they ſet fire to it, and without farther moleſtation, continued the preparations for their retreat.

The Spaniards abandon the city.

THIS became the more neceſſary, as the Mexicans were ſo much aſtoniſhed at the laſt efforts of the Spaniſh valour, that they began to change their whole ſyſtem of hoſtility, and inſtead of inceſſant attacks, endeavoured, by barricading the ſtreets, and breaking down the cauſeways, to cut off the communication of the Spaniards with the continent, and thus to ſtarve an enemy whom they could not ſubdue. The firſt point to be determined, was whether they ſhould march out openly in the face of day, when they could diſcern every danger, and ſee how to regulate their own motions, as well as how to reſiſt the aſſaults of the enemy; or whether they ſhould endeavour to retire ſecretly in the night. The latter was preferred, partly from hopes that their national ſuperſtition would reſtrain the Mexicans from venturing to attack them in the night, and partly from their own fond belief in the predictions of a private ſoldier, who having acquired univerſal credit by a ſmattering of learning, and his pretenſions to aſtrology, boldly aſſured them of ſucceſs, if they made their retreat in this manner. They began to move towards midnight, in three diviſions. Sandoval led the van; Pedro Alvarado, and Velaſquez de Leon, had the conduct of the rear; and Cortes commanded in the centre, where he placed the priſoners, among

among whom were a ſon and two daughters of Montezuma, together with ſeveral Mexicans of diſtinction, the artillery, the baggage, and a portable bridge of timber, intended to be laid over the breaches in the cauſeway. They marched in profound ſilence along the cauſeway which led to Tacuba, becauſe it was ſhorter than any of the reſt, and, lying moſt remote from the road towards Tlaſcala and the ſea coaſt, had been left more entire by the Mexicans. They reached the firſt breach in it without moleſtation, hoping that their retreat was undiſcovered.

BOOK V. 1520.

Attacked by the Mexicans.

BUT the Mexicans, unperceived, had not only watched all their motions with attention, but had made proper diſpoſitions for a moſt formidable attack. While the Spaniards were intent upon placing their bridge in the breach, and occupied in conducting their horſes and artillery along it, they were ſuddenly alarmed with the tremendous ſound of warlike inſtruments, and a general ſhout from an innumerable multitude of enemies; the lake was covered with canoes; flights of arrows, and ſhowers of ſtones poured in upon them from every quarter; the Mexicans ruſhing forward to the charge with fearleſs impetuoſity, as if they hoped in that moment to be avenged for all their wrongs. Unfortunately the wooden-bridge, by the weight of the artillery, was wedged ſo faſt into the ſtones and mud, that it was impoſſible to remove it. Diſmayed at this accident, the Spaniards advanced with precipitation towards the ſecond breach. The Mexicans hemmed them in on every ſide, and though they defended themſelves with their uſual courage, yet crouded together as they were on a narrow cauſeway, their diſcipline and military ſkill were of little avail, nor did the obſcurity of the night permit them to derive great advantage from their firearms, or the ſuperiority of their other weapons. All

Mexico

BOOK V. 1520.

Mexico was now in arms, and ſo eager were the people on the deſtruction of their oppreſſors, that they who were not near enough to annoy them in perſon, impatient of the delay, preſſed forward with ſuch ardour, as drove on their countrymen in the front with irreſiſtible violence. Freſh warriors inſtantly filled the place of ſuch as fell. The Spaniards, weary with ſlaughter, and unable to ſuſtain the weight of the torrent that poured in upon them, began to give way. In a moment the confuſion was univerſal; horſe and foot, officers and ſoldiers, friends and enemies, were mingled together; and while all fought, and many fell, they could hardly diſtinguiſh from what hand the blow came.

Their diſaſters,

CORTES, with about a hundred foot ſoldiers and a few horſe, forced his way over the two remaining breaches in the cauſeway, the bodies of the dead ſerving to fill up the chaſms, and reached the main land. Having formed them as ſoon as they arrived, he returned with ſuch as were yet capable of ſervice, to aſſiſt his friends in their retreat, and to encourage them, by his preſence and example, to perſevere in the efforts requiſite to effect it. He met with part of his ſoldiers, who had broke through the enemy, but found many more overwhelmed by the multitude of their aggreſſors, or periſhing in the lake; and heard the piteous lamentations of others, whom the Mexicans, having taken alive, were carrying off in triumph to be ſacrificed to the god of war. Before day, all who had eſcaped aſſembled at Tacuba. But when the morning dawned, and diſcovered to the view of Cortes his ſhattered battalion, reduced to leſs than half its number, the ſurvivors dejected, and moſt of them covered with wounds, the thoughts of what they had ſuffered, and the remembrance of ſo many faithful friends and

and gallant followers who had fallen in that night of ſorrow[z], pierced his ſoul with ſuch anguiſh, that while he was forming their ranks, and iſſuing ſome neceſſary orders, his ſoldiers obſerved the tears trickling from his eyes, and remarked, with much ſatisfaction, that while attentive to the duties of a general, he was not inſenſible to the feelings of a man. 1520.

In this fatal retreat many officers of diſtinction periſhed[a], and among theſe Velaſquez de Leon, who having forſaken the party of his kinſman, the governor of Cuba, to follow the fortune of his companions, was, on that account, as well as for his ſuperior merit, reſpected by them as the ſecond perſon in the army. All the artillery, ammunition, and baggage, were loſt; the greater part of the horſes, and above two thouſand Tlaſcalans, were killed, and only a very ſmall portion of the treaſure which they had amaſſed was ſaved. This, which had been always their chief object, proved now a great cauſe of their calamity; for many of the ſoldiers having ſo overloaded themſelves with bars of gold as rendered them unfit for action, and retarded their flight, fell, ignominiouſly, the victims of their own inconſiderate avarice. Amidſt ſo many diſaſters, it was ſome conſolation to find that Aguilar and Marina, whoſe function as interpreters was of ſuch eſſential importance, had made their eſcape[b]. and loſs.

The firſt care of Cortes was to find ſome ſhelter for his wearied troops; for as the Mexicans infeſted them on every ſide, and the people of Tacuba began to take arms, he could not continue in his Difficult retreat of the Spaniards.

[z] *Noche Triſte* is the name by which it is ſtill diſtinguiſhed in New Spain. [a] See NOTE XC.

[b] Cortes Relat. p. 248. B. Diaz. c. 128. Gomara Cron. c. 109. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. x. c. 11, 12.

preſent

BOOK V. 1520.

preſent ſtation. He directed his march towards the riſing ground, and having fortunately diſcovered a temple ſituated on an eminence, took poſſeſſion of it. There he found not only the ſhelter for which he wiſhed, but, what was no leſs wanted, ſome proviſions to refreſh his men; and though the enemy did not intermit their attacks throughout the day, they were with little difficulty prevented from making any impreſſion. During this time Cortes was engaged in deep conſultation with his officers, concerning the route which they ought to take in their retreat. They were now on the weſt ſide of the lake. Tlaſcala, the only place where they could hope for a friendly reception, lay about ſixty-four miles to the eaſt of Mexico [c]; ſo that they were obliged to go round the north end of the lake before they could fall into the road which led thither. A Tlaſcalan ſoldier undertook to be their guide, and conducted them through a country in ſome places marſhy, in others mountainous, in all ill-cultivated and thinly peopled. They marched for ſix days with little reſpite, and under continual alarms, numerous bodies of the Mexicans hovering around them, ſometimes haraſſing them at a diſtance with their miſſile weapons, and ſometimes attacking them cloſely in front, in rear, in flank, with great boldneſs, as they now knew that they were not invincible. Nor were the fatigue and danger of thoſe inceſſant conflicts the worſt evils to which they were expoſed. As the barren country through which they paſſed afforded hardly any proviſions, they were reduced to feed on berries, roots, and the ſtalks of green maize; and at the very time that famine was depreſſing their ſpirits and waſting their ſtrength, their ſituation required the moſt vigorous and unremitting exertions of courage and activity. Amidſt thoſe complicated diſtreſſes, one circum-

[c] Villa Segnor Teatro Americano, lib. ii. c. 11.

ſtance

ſtance ſupported and animated the Spaniards. Their commander ſuſtained this ſad reverſe of fortune with unſhaken magnanimity. His preſence of mind never forſook him; his ſagacity foreſaw every event, and his vigilance provided for it. He was foremoſt in every danger, and endured every hardſhip with cheerfulneſs. The difficulties with which he was ſurrounded ſeemed to call forth new talents; and his ſoldiers, though deſpairing themſelves, continued to follow him with increaſing confidence in his abilities. BOOK V. 1520.

Battle of Otumba.

On the ſixth day they reached Otumba, not far from the road between Mexico and Tlaſcala. Early next morning they began to advance towards it, flying parties of the enemy ſtill hanging on their rear; and amidſt the inſults with which they accompanied their hoſtilities, Marina remarked that they often exclaimed with exultation, "Go on, robbers; go to the place where you ſhall quickly meet the vengeance due to your crimes." The meaning of this threat the Spaniards did not comprehend, until they reached the ſummit of an eminence before them. There a ſpacious valley opened to their view, covered with a vaſt army, extending as far as the eye could reach. The Mexicans, while with one body of their troops they haraſſed the Spaniards in their retreat, had aſſembled their principal force on the other ſide of the lake; and marching along the road which led directly to Tlaſcala, poſted it in the plain of Otumba, through which they knew Cortes muſt paſs. At the ſight of this incredible multitude, which they could ſurvey at once from the riſing ground, the Spaniards were aſtoniſhed, and even the boldeſt began to deſpair. But Cortes, without allowing leiſure for their fears to acquire ſtrength by reflection, after warning them briefly that no alternative now remained but

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but to conquer or to die, led them inſtantly to the charge. The Mexicans waited their approach with unuſual fortitude. Such, however, was the ſuperiority of the Spaniſh diſcipline and arms, that the impreſſion of this ſmall body was irreſiſtible; and whichever way its force was directed, it penetrated and diſperſed the moſt numerous battalions. But while theſe gave way in one quarter, new combatants advanced from another, and the Spaniards, though ſucceſsful in every attack, were ready to ſink under thoſe repeated efforts, without ſeeing any end of their toil, or any hope of victory. At that time Cortes obſerved the great ſtandard of the empire, which was carried before the Mexican general, advancing; and fortunately recollecting to have heard, that on the fate of it depended the event of every battle, he aſſembled a few of his braveſt officers, whoſe horſes were ſtill capable of ſervice, and placing himſelf at their head, puſhed forward towards the ſtandard with an impetuoſity which bore down every thing before it. A choſen body of nobles, who guarded the ſtandard, made ſome reſiſtance, but were ſoon broken. Cortes, with a ſtroke of his lance, wounded the Mexican general, and threw him to the ground. One of his followers alighting, put an end to his life, and laid hold of the imperial ſtandard. The moment that their leader fell, and the ſtandard, towards which all directed their eyes, diſappeared, an univerſal panic ſtruck the Mexicans, and, as if the bond which held them together had been diſſolved, every enſign was lowered, each ſoldier threw away his weapons, and all fled with precipitation to the mountains. The Spaniards, unable to purſue them far, returned to collect the ſpoils of the field, which were ſo valuable as to be ſome compenſation for the wealth which they had loſt in Mexico; for in the enemy's army were moſt of their principal warriors dreſſed

ed out in their richeſt ornaments, as if they had been marching to aſſured victory. Next day, to their great joy, they entered the Tlaſcalan territories [d]. BOOK V.

1520. July 8. Reception of the Spaniards in Tlaſcala.

But, amidſt their ſatisfaction in having got beyond the precincts of an hoſtile country, they could not look forward without ſolicitude, as they were ſtill uncertain what reception they might meet with from allies, to whom they returned in a condition very different from that in which they had lately ſet out from their dominions. Happily, for them, the enmity of the Tlaſcalans to the Mexican name was ſo inveterate, their deſire to avenge the death of their countrymen ſo vehement, and the aſcendant which Cortes had acquired over the chiefs of the republic ſo complete, that, far from entertaining a thought of taking any advantage of the diſtreſſed ſituation in which they beheld the Spaniards, they received them with a tenderneſs and cordiality which quickly diſſipated all their ſuſpicions.

New deliberations of Cortes.

Some interval of tranquillity and indulgence was now abſolutely neceſſary; not only that the Spaniards might give attention to the cure of their wounds, which had been too long neglected, but in order to recruit their ſtrength, exhauſted by ſuch a long ſucceſſion of fatigue and hardſhips. During this, Cortes learned that he and his companions were not the only Spaniards who had felt the effects of the Mexican enmity. A conſiderable detachment, which was marching from Zempoalla towards the capital, had been cut off by the people of Tepeaca. A ſmaller party, returning from Tlaſcala to Vera Cruz, with the ſhare of the

[d] Cortes Relat. p. 219. B. Diaz. c. 128. Gomara Cron. c. 110. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. x. c. 12, 13.

Mexican

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Mexican gold allotted to the garriſon, had been ſurpriſed and deſtroyed in the mountains. At a juncture when the life of every Spaniard was of importance, ſuch loſſes were deeply felt. The ſchemes which Cortes was meditating rendered them peculiarly afflictive to him. While his enemies, and even many of his own followers, conſidered the diſaſters which had befallen him as fatal to the progreſs of his arms, and imagined that nothing now remained but ſpeedily to abandon a country which he had invaded with unequal force, his mind, as eminent for perſeverance as for enterpriſe, was ſtill bent on accompliſhing his original purpoſe, of ſubjecting the Mexican empire to the crown of Caſtile. Severe and unexpected as the check was which he had received, it did not appear to him a ſufficient reaſon for relinquiſhing the conqueſts which he had already made, or againſt reſuming his operations with better hopes of ſucceſs. The colony at Vera Cruz was not only ſafe, but had remained unmoleſted. The people of Zempoalla and the adjacent diſtricts had diſcovered no ſymptoms of defection. The Tlaſcalans continued faithful to their alliance. On their martial ſpirit, eaſily rouzed to arms, and inflamed with implacable hatred of the Mexicans, he depended for powerful aid. He had ſtill the command of a body of Spaniards, equal in number to that with which he had opened his way into the centre of the empire, and had taken poſſeſſion of the capital; ſo that with the benefit of greater experience, as well as more perfect knowledge of the country, he did not deſpair of quickly recovering all that he had been deprived of by untoward events.

The meaſures he takes.

FULL of this idea, he courted the Tlaſcalan chiefs with ſuch attention, and diſtributed among them ſo

ſo liberally the rich ſpoils of Otumba, that he was ſecure of obtaining whatever he ſhould require of the republic. He drew a ſmall ſupply of ammunition, and two or three field-pieces, from his ſtores at Vera Cruz. He diſpatched an officer of confidence with four ſhips of Narvaez's fleet to Hiſpaniola and Jamaica, to engage adventurers, and to purchaſe horſes, gunpowder, and other military ſtores. As he knew that it would be vain to attempt the reduction of Mexico, unleſs he could ſecure the command of the lake, he gave orders to prepare in the mountains of Tlaſcala materials for building twelve brigantines, ſo as they might be carried thither in pieces ready to be put together, and launched when he ſtood need of in their ſervice [e].

1520.

Mutinous ſpirit of his troops.

But while, with provident attention, he was taking thoſe neceſſary ſteps towards the execution of his meaſures, an obſtacle aroſe in a quarter where it was leaſt expected, but moſt formidable. The ſpirit of diſcontent and mutiny broke out in his own army. Many of Narvaez's followers were planters rather than ſoldiers, and had accompanied him to New Spain with ſanguine hopes of obtaining ſettlements, and little inclination to engage in the hardſhips and dangers of war. As the ſame motives had induced them to enter into their new engagements with Cortes, they no ſooner became acquainted with the nature of the ſervice, than they bitterly repented of their choice. Such of them as had the good fortune to ſurvive the perilous adventures in which their own imprudence had involved them, happy in having made their eſcape, trembled at the thoughts of being expoſed a ſecond time to ſimilar calamities. As ſoon as they diſcovered the intention of Cortes, they began ſecretly to mur-

[e] Cortes Relat. p. 255, E. Gomara Cron. c. 117.

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murmur and cabal, and waxing gradually more audacious, they, in a body, offered a remonſtrance to their general againſt the imprudence of attacking a powerful empire with his ſhattered forces, and formally required him to lead them back directly to Cuba. Though Cortes, long practiſed in the arts of command, employed arguments, entreaties, and preſents, to convince or to ſoothe them; though his own ſoldiers, animated with the ſpirit of their leader, warmly ſeconded his endeavours; he found their fears too violent and deep-rooted to be removed, and the utmoſt he could effect was to prevail with them to defer their departure for ſome time, on a promiſe that he would, at a more proper juncture, diſmiſs ſuch as ſhould deſire it.

Means he employs to revive their confidence.

THAT the malcontents might have no leiſure to brood over the cauſes of their diſaffection, he reſolved inſtantly to call forth his troops into action. He propoſed to chaſtiſe the people of Tepeaca for the outrage which they had committed, and as the detachment which they had cut off happened to be compoſed moſtly of ſoldiers who had ſerved under Narvaez, their companions, from the deſire of vengeance, engaged more willingly in this war. He took the command in perſon, accompanied by a numerous body of Tlaſcalans, and in the ſpace of a few weeks, after various encounters, with great ſlaughter of the Tepeacans, reduced that province to ſubjection. During ſeveral months, while he waited for the ſupplies of men and ammunition which he expected, and was carrying on his preparations for conſtructing the brigantines, he kept his troops conſtantly employed in various expeditions againſt the adjacent provinces, all of which were conducted with an uniform tenor of ſucceſs. By theſe, his men became again accuſtomed to victory, and reſumed their wonted ſenſe of ſuperiority; the Mexi-

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can power was weakened: the Tlaſcalan warriors acquired the habit of acting in conjunction with the Spaniards; and the chiefs of the republic delighted to ſee their country enriched with the ſpoils of all the people around them, and aſtoniſhed every day with freſh diſcoveries of the irreſiſtible proweſs of their allies, declined no effort requiſite to ſupport them. BOOK V. 1520.

Strengthened by ſeveral reinforcements.

ALL thoſe preparatory arrangements, however, though the moſt prudent and efficacious which the ſituation of Cortes allowed him to make, would have been of little avail, without a reinforcement of Spaniſh ſoldiers. Of this he was ſo deeply ſenſible, that it was the chief object of his thoughts and wiſhes; and yet his only proſpect of obtaining it from the return of the officer whom he had ſent to the iſles to ſolicit aid, was both diſtant and uncertain. But what neither his own ſagacity nor power could have procured, he owed to a ſeries of fortunate and unforeſeen incidents. The governor of Cuba, to whom the ſucceſs of Narvaez appeared an event of infallible certainty, having ſent two ſmall ſhips after him with new inſtructions and a ſupply of men and military ſtores, the officer whom Cortes had appointed to command on the coaſt, artfully decoyed them into the harbour of Vera Cruz, ſeized the veſſels, and eaſily perſuaded the ſoldiers to follow the ſtandard of a more able leader than him whom they were deſtined to join [f]. Soon after three ſhips of more conſiderable force came into the harbour ſeparately. Theſe belonged to an armament fitted out by Franciſco de Garay, governor of Jamaica, who, being poſſeſſed with the rage of diſcovery and conqueſt which animated every Spaniard ſettled in America, had long aimed at intrud-

[f] B. Diaz. c. 131.

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king into some district of New Spain, and dividing with Cortes the glory and gain of annexing that empire to the crown of Castile. They unadvisedly made their attempt on the northern provinces, where the country was poor and the people fierce and warlike; and, after a cruel succession of disasters, famine compelled them to venture into Vera Cruz, and cast themselves upon the mercy of their countrymen. Their fidelity was not proof against the splendid hopes and promises which had seduced other adventurers, and as if the spirit of revolt had been contagious in New Spain, they likewise abandoned the master whom they were bound to serve, and inlisted under Cortes [g]. Nor was it America alone that furnished such unexpected aid. A ship arrived from Spain, freighted by some private merchants with military stores, in hopes of a profitable market in a country, the fame of whose opulence began to spread over Europe. Cortes eagerly purchased a cargo which to him was invaluable, and the crew, following the general example, joined him at Tlascala [h].

October 28.

From those various quarters, the army of Cortes was augmented with an hundred and eighty men, and twenty horses, a reinforcement too inconsiderable to produce any consequences which would entitle it to have been mentioned in the history of other parts of the globe. But in that of America, where great revolutions were brought about by causes which seemed to bear no proportion to their effects, such small events rise into importance, because they were sufficient, to decide with respect to the fate of kingdoms. Nor is it the least remarkable instance of the singular felicity conspicuous on any passages

[g] Cortes Relat. 253. F. B. Diaz. c. 133. [h] Ibid. c. 136.

of

of Cortes's ſtory, that the two perſons chiefly inſtrumental in furniſhing him with thoſe ſeaſonable ſupplies ſhould be an avowed enemy who aimed at his deſtruction, and an envious rival who wiſhed to ſupplant him.

Number of his forces.

THE firſt effect of the junction with his new followers was to enable him to diſmiſs ſuch of Narvaez's ſoldiers as remained with reluctance in his ſervice. After their departure, he ſtill muſtered five hundred and fifty infantry, of which fourſcore were armed with muſkets or croſs-bows, forty horſemen, and a train of nine field-pieces [i]. At the head of theſe, accompanied by ten thouſand Tlaſcalans and other friendly Indians, Cortes began his march towards Mexico, on the twenty-eighth of December, ſix months after his fatal retreat from that city [k].

Preparations of the Mexicans for their defence.

NOR did he advance to attack an enemy unprepared to receive him. Upon the death of Montezuma, the Mexican chiefs, in whom the right of electing the emperor was veſted, had inſtantly raiſed his brother Quetlavaca to the throne. His avowed and inveterate enmity to the Spaniards, would have been ſufficient to gain their ſuffrages, although he had been leſs diſtinguiſhed for courage and capacity. He had an immediate opportunity of ſhewing that he was worthy of their choice, by conducting, in perſon, thoſe fierce attacks which compelled the Spaniards to abandon his capital; and as ſoon as their retreat afforded him any reſpite from action, he took meaſures for preventing their return to Mexico, with prudence equal to the ſpirit which he had diſplayed in driving them out of it. As from

[i] Cortes Relat. 255, E. [k] Relat. 256, A. B. Diaz. c. 137.

the

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the vicinity of Tlaſcala, he could not be unacquainted with the motions and intentions of Cortes, he obſerved the ſtorm that was gathering, and began early to provide againſt it. He repaired what the Spaniards had ruined in the city, and ſtrengthened it with ſuch new fortifications as the ſkill of his ſubjects was capable of erecting. Beſide filling his magazines with the uſual weapons of war, he gave direction to make long ſpears headed with the ſwords and daggers taken from the Spaniards, in order to annoy the cavalry. He ſummoned the people in every province of the empire to take arms againſt their oppreſſors, and as an encouragement to exert themſelves with vigour, he promiſed them exemption from all the taxes which his predeceſſors had impoſed [l]. But what he laboured with the greateſt earneſtneſs was, to deprive the Spaniards of the advantages which they derived from the friendſhip of the Tlaſcalans, by endeavouring to perſuade that people to renounce all connection with men who were not only avowed enemies of the gods whom they worſhipped, but who would not fail to ſubject them at laſt to the ſame yoke, which they were now inconſiderately leading their aid to impoſe upon others. Theſe repreſentations, no leſs ſtriking than well-founded, were urged ſo forcibly by his ambaſſadors, that it required all the addreſs of Cortes to prevent their making a dangerous impreſſion [m].

But while Quetlavaca was arranging his plan of defence, with a degree of foreſight, uncommon in an American, his days were cut ſhort by the ſmall-pox. This diſtemper, which raged at that time in New Spain with fatal malignity, was unknown in

[l] Cortes Relat. p. 253, E. 254, A. B. Diaz. c. 140.
[m] B. Diaz. c. 129. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. x. c. 14, 19.

that

that quarter of the globe, until it was introduced by the Europeans, and may be reckoned among the greateſt calamities brought upon them by their invaders. In his ſtead the Mexicans raiſed to the throne Guatimozin, nephew and ſon-in-law of Montezuma, a young man of ſuch high reputation for abilities and valour, that in this dangerous criſis, his countrymen, with one voice, called him to the ſupreme command [n]. 1520.

As ſoon as Cortes entered the enemy's territories, he diſcovered various preparations to obſtruct his progreſs. But his troops forced their way with little difficulty, and took poſſeſſion of Tezeuco, the ſecond city of the empire, ſituated on the banks of the lake about twenty miles from Mexico [o]. Here he determined to eſtabliſh his head-quarters, as the moſt proper ſtation for launching his brigantines, as well as for making his approaches to the capital. In order to render his reſidence there more ſecure, he depoſed the cazique or chief, who was at the head of that community, under pretext of ſome defect in his title, and ſubſtituted in his place a perſon whom a faction of the nobles pointed out as the right heir of that dignity. Attached to him by this benefit, the new cazique and his adherents ſerved the Spaniards with inviolable fidelity [p]. 1521. Cortes advances towards Mexico.

As the conſtruction of the brigantines advanced ſlowly under the unſkilful hands of ſoldiers and Indians, whom Cortes was obliged to employ in aſſiſting three or four carpenters who happened fortunately to be in his ſervice, and as he had not yet received the reinforcement which he expected from His operations ſlow and cautious.

[n] B. Diaz. c. 130. [o] Villa Senor Theatro Americano, i. 156. [p] Cortes Relat. 256, &c. B. Diaz. c. 137. Gomara Cron. c. 121. Herrera, dec. 3. c. 1.

Hiſpaniola,

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Hiſpaniola, he was not in a condition to turn his arms directly againſt the capital. To have attacked a city ſo populous, ſo well prepared for defence, and in a ſituation of ſuch peculiar ſtrength, muſt have expoſed his troops to inevitable deſtruction. Three months elapſed before the materials for conſtructing the brigantines were finiſhed, and before he heard any thing with reſpect to the ſucceſs of his negociation in Hiſpaniola. This, however, was not a ſeaſon of inaction to Cortes. He attacked ſucceſſively ſeveral of the towns ſituated around the lake, and though all the Mexican power was exerted to obſtruct his operations, he either compelled them to ſubmit to the Spaniſh crown, or reduced them to ruins. Other towns he endeavoured to conciliate by more gentle means, and though he could not hold any intercourſe with the inhabitants but by the intervention of interpreters, yet, under all the diſadvantage of that tedious and imperfect mode of communication, he had acquired ſuch thorough knowledge of the ſtate of the country, as well as of the diſpoſitions of the people, that he conducted his negociations and intrigues with aſtoniſhing dexterity and ſucceſs. Moſt of the cities adjacent to Mexico were originally the capitals of ſmall independent ſtates; and ſome of them having been but lately annexed to the Mexican empire, ſtill retained the remembrance of their ancient liberty, and bore with impatience the rigorous yoke of their new maſters. Cortes having early obſerved ſymptoms of their diſaffection, availed himſelf of this knowledge to gain their confidence and friendſhip. By offering, with confidence, to deliver them from the odious dominion of the Mexicans, and by liberal promiſes of more indulgent treatment, if they would unite with him againſt their oppreſſors, he prevailed on the people of ſeveral conſiderable diſtricts not only to acknowledge the king of Caſtile as

as their ſovereign, but to ſupply the Spaniſh camp with proviſions, and to ſtrengthen his army with auxiliary troops. Guatimozin, on the firſt appearance of defection among his ſubjects, exerted himſelf with vigour to prevent or to puniſh their revolt; but in ſpite of his efforts, the ſpirit continued to ſpread. The Spaniards gradually acquired new allies, and with deep concern he beheld Cortes arming againſt his empire thoſe very hands which ought to have been active in its defence; and ready to advance againſt the capital at the head of a numerous body of his own ſubjects [q].

1521.

WHILE, by thoſe various methods, Cortes was gradually circumſcribing the Mexican power, within ſuch narrow limits that his proſpect of overturning it ſeemed neither to be uncertain nor remote, all his ſchemes were well nigh defeated, by a conſpiracy no leſs unexpected than dangerous. The ſoldiers of Narvaez had never united perfectly with the original companions of Cortes, nor did they enter into his meaſures with the ſame cordial zeal. Upon every occaſion that required any extraordinary effort of courage or of patience, their ſpirits were apt to ſink; and now, on a near view of what they had to encounter, in attempting to reduce a city ſo inacceſſible as Mexico, and defended by a numerous army, the reſolution even of thoſe among them who had adhered to Cortes when he was deſerted by their aſſociates, began to fail. Their fears led them to preſumptuous and unſoldier-like diſcuſſions concerning the propriety of their general's meaſures, and the improbability of their ſucceſs. From theſe they proceeded to cenſure and invectives, and at laſt began to deliberate how they might provide for

[q] Cortes Relat. 256—260. B. Diaz. c. 137—140. Gomara Cron. c. 122, 123. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. i. c. 1, 2.

their

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their own ſafety, of which they deemed their commander to be totally negligent. Antonio Villefagna, a private ſoldier, but bold, intriguing, and ſtrongly attached to Velaſquez, artfully fomented this growing ſpirit of diſaffection. His quarters became the rendezvous of the malcontents, where, after many conſultations, they could diſcover no method of checking Cortes in his career, but by aſſaſſinating him and his moſt conſiderable officers, and conferring the command upon ſome perſon who would relinquiſh his wild plans, and adopt meaſures more conſiſtent with the general ſecurity. Deſpair inſpired them with courage. The hour for perpetrating the crime, the perſons whom they deſtined as victims, the officers to ſucceed them in command, were all named; and the conſpirators ſigned an aſſociation, by which they bound themſelves with moſt ſolemn oaths to mutual fidelity. But on the evening before the appointed day, one of Cortes's ancient followers, who had been ſeduced into the conſpiracy, touched with compunction at the imminent danger of a man whom he had long been accuſtomed to revere, or ſtruck with horror at his own treachery, went privately to his general, and revealed to him all that he knew. Cortes, though deeply alarmed, diſcerned at once what conduct was proper in a ſituation ſo critical. He repaired inſtantly to Villefagna's quarters, accompanied by ſome of his moſt truſty officers. The aſtoniſhment and confuſion of the man at this unexpected viſit anticipated the confeſſion of his guilt. While his attendants ſeized him, Cortes ſnatched from his boſom a paper containing the aſſociation, ſigned by the conſpirators. Impatient to know how far the defection extended, he retired to read it, and found there names which filled him with ſurpriſe and ſorrow. But, aware how dangerous a ſtrict ſcrutiny might prove at ſuch a juncture, he confined

confined his judicial inquiries to Villefagna alone. As the proofs of his guilt were manifeſt, he was condemned after a ſhort trial, and next morning he was ſeen hanging before the door of the houſe in which he had lodged. Cortes called his troops together, and having explained to them the atrocious purpoſe of the conſpirators, as well as the juſtice of the puniſhment inflicted on Villefagna, he added, with an appearance of ſatisfaction, that he was entirely ignorant with reſpect to all the circumſtances of this dark tranſaction, as the traitor, when arreſted, had ſuddenly torn and ſwallowed a paper, which probably contained an account of it, and under the ſevereſt tortures poſſeſſed ſuch conſtancy as to conceal the names of his accomplices. This artful declaration reſtored tranquillity to many a breaſt that was throbbing, while he ſpoke, with conſciouſneſs of guilt and dread of detection; and by this prudent moderation, Cortes had the advantage of having diſcovered and of being able to obſerve ſuch of his followers as were diſaffected; while they, flattering themſelves that their paſt crime was unknown, endeavoured to avert any ſuſpicion of it, by redoubling their activity and zeal in his ſervice [r]. 1521.

His ſingular preparations for building brigantines.

Cortes did not allow them leiſure to ruminate on what had happened; and as the moſt effectual means of preventing the return of a mutinous ſpirit, he determined to call forth his troops immediately to action. Fortunately, a proper occaſion for this occurred without his ſeeming to court it. He received intelligence, that the materials for building the brigantines were at length completely finiſhed, and waited only for a body of Spaniards to conduct them to Tezeuco. The command of this convoy, conſiſt-

[r] Cortes Relat. 283, C. B. Diaz. c. 146. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. i. c. 1.

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king of two hundred foot ſoldiers, fifteen horſemen, and two field-pieces, he gave to Sandoval, who, by the vigilance, activity, and courage which he manifeſted on every occaſion, was growing daily in his confidence, and in the eſtimation of his fellow-ſoldiers. The ſervice was no leſs ſingular than important; the beams, the planks, the maſts, the cordage, the ſails, the iron-work, and all the infinite variety of articles requiſite for the conſtruction of thirteen brigantines, were to be carried ſixty miles over land, through a mountainous country, by people who were unacquainted with the miniſtry of domeſtic animals, or the aid of machines to facilitate any work of labour. The Tlaſcalans furniſhed eight thouſand *Tamenes*, an inferior order of men deſtined for ſervile taſks, to carry the materials on their ſhoulders, and appointed fifteen thouſand warriors to accompany and defend them. Sandoval made the diſpoſition for their progreſs with great propriety, placing the *Tamenes* in the centre, one body of warriors in the front, another in the rear, with conſiderable parties to cover the flanks. To each of theſe he joined ſome Spaniards, not only to aſſiſt them in danger, but to accuſtom them to regularity and ſubordination. A body ſo numerous, and ſo much encumbered, advanced leiſurely, but in excellent order; and in ſome places, where it was confined by the woods or mountains, the line of march extended above ſix miles. Parties of Mexicans frequently appeared hovering around them on the high grounds; but perceiving no proſpect of ſucceſs in attacking an enemy continually on his guard, and prepared to receive them, they did not venture to moleſt him; and Sandoval had the glory of conducting ſafely to Tezeuco a convoy on which all the future operations of his countrymen depended [s].

[s] Cortes Relat. 260, C. E. B. Diaz. c. 140.

THIS

THIS was followed by another event of no leſs moment. Four ſhips arrived at Vera Cruz from Hiſpaniola, with two hundred ſoldiers, eighty horſes, two battering cannon, and a conſiderable ſupply of ammunition and arms [t]. Elevated with obſerving that all his preparatory ſchemes, either for recruiting his own army, or impairing the force of the enemy, had now produced their full effect, Cortes, impatient to begin the ſiege in form, haſtened the launching of the brigantines. To facilitate this, he had employed a vaſt number of Indians for two months in deepening the ſmall rivulet which runs by Tezeuco into the lake, and in forming it into a canal near two miles in length [u]; and though the Mexicans, aware of his intentions, as well as of the danger which threatened them, endeavoured frequently to interrupt the labourers, or to burn the brigantines, the work was at laſt completed [x]. On the twenty-eighth of April, all the Spaniſh troops, together with auxiliary Indians were drawn up on the banks of the canal; and with extraordinary military pomp, heightened and rendered more ſolemn by the celebration of the moſt ſacred rites of religion, the brigantines, were launched. As they fell down the canal in order, Father Olmedo bleſſed them, and gave each its name. Every eye followed them with wonder and hope, until they entered the lake, when they hoiſted their ſails, and bore away before the wind. A general ſhout of joy was raiſed; all admiring that bold inventive genius, which, by means ſo extraordinary that their ſucceſs almoſt exceeded belief, had acquired the command of a fleet, without the aid of which Mexico would

1521. Receives a new reinforcement.

The brigantines launched.

[t] Cortes Relat. 259, F. 262, D. Gomara Cron. c. 129.
[u] See NOTE XCI. [x] B. Diaz. c. 140.

have

BOOK V. have continued to ſet the Spaniſh power and arms at defiance [y].

1521. Diſpoſitions for the ſiege.

CORTES determined to attack the city from three different quarters; from Tezeuco on the eaſt ſide of the lake, from Tacuba on the weſt, and from Cuyocan towards the ſouth. Thoſe towns were ſituated on the principal cauſeways which led to the capital, and intended for their defence. He appointed Sandoval to command in the firſt, Pedro de Alvarado in the ſecond, and Chriſtoval de Olid in the third; allotting to each a numerous body of Indian auxiliaries, together with an equal diviſion of Spaniards, who, by the junction of the troops from Hiſpaniola, amounted now to eighty-ſix horſemen, and eight hundred and eighteen foot ſoldiers; of whom a hundred and eighteen were armed with muſkets or croſs-bows. Their train of artillery conſiſted of three battering-cannon, and fifteen field-pieces [z]. He reſerved for himſelf, as the ſtation of greateſt importance and danger, the conduct of the brigantines, each armed with one of his ſmall cannon, and manned with twenty-five Spaniards.

May 10.

As Alvarado and Olid proceeded towards the poſts aſſigned them, they broke down the aqueducts which the ingenuity of the Mexicans had erected for conveying water into the capital, and by the diſtreſs to which this reduced the inhabitants, gave a beginning to the calamities which they were deſtined to ſuffer [a]. Alvarado and Olid found the towns of which they were ordered to take poſſeſſion deſerted by their inhabitants, who had fled for ſafe-

[y] Cortes Relat. 266, C. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. i. c. 5. Gomara Cron. c. 129.

[z] Cortes Relat. 266, C.

[a] Cortes Relat. 267, B. B. Diaz. c. 150. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. i. c. 13.

ty

ty to the capital, where Guatimozin had collected the chief force of his empire, as there alone he could hope to make a ſucceſsful ſtand againſt the formidable enemies who were approaching to aſſault him. 1521.

THE firſt effort of the Mexicans was to deſtroy the fleet of brigantines, the fatal effects of whoſe operations they foreſaw and dreaded. Though the brigantines, after all the labour and merit of Cortes in forming them, were of inconſiderable bulk, rudely conſtructed, and manned chiefly with landmen, hardly poſſeſſed of ſkill enough to conduct them, they muſt have been objects of terror to a people unacquainted with any navigation but that of their lake, and poſſeſſed of no veſſel larger than a canoe. Neceſſity, however, urged Guatimozin to hazard the attack; and hoping to ſupply by numbers what he wanted in force, he aſſembled ſuch a multitude of canoes as covered the face of the lake. They rowed on boldly to the charge, while the brigantines, retarded by a dead calm, could ſcarcely advance to meet them. But as the enemy drew near, a breeze ſuddenly ſprung up; in a moment the ſails were ſpread, and the brigantines, with irreſiſtible impetuoſity, broke through their feeble opponents, overſet many canoes, and diſſipated the whole armament with ſuch ſlaughter, as convinced the Mexicans, that the progreſs of the Europeans in knowledge and arts rendered their ſuperiority greater on this new element than they had hitherto found it by land [b]. Mexicans attack the brigantines. Repulſed.

FROM that time Cortes remained maſter of the lake, and the brigantines not only preſerved a communication between the Spaniards in their different Singular plan of conducting the ſiege.

[b] Cortes Relat. 267, C. B. Diaz. c. 150. Gomara Cron. c. 131. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. i. c. 17.

ſtations,

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ſtations, though at conſiderable diſtance from each other, but were employed to cover the cauſeways on each ſide, and keep off the canoes, when they attempted to annoy the troops as they advanced towards the city. He formed the brigantines in three diviſions, allotting one to each ſtation, with orders to ſecond the operations of the officer who commanded there. From all the three ſtations he puſhed on the attack againſt the city with equal vigour; but in a manner ſo very different from that whereby ſieges are conducted in regular war, that he himſelf ſeems afraid that it would appear no leſs improper than ſingular, to perſons unacquainted with his ſituation [c]. Each morning his troops aſſaulted the barricades which the enemy had erected on the cauſeways, forced their way over the trenches which they had dug, and through the canals where the bridges were broken down, and endeavoured to penetrate into the heart of the city, in hopes of obtaining ſome deciſive advantage, which might force the enemy to ſurrender, and terminate the war at once; but when the obſtinate valour of the Mexicans rendered the efforts of the day ineffectual, the Spaniards retired in the evening to their former quarters. Thus their toil and danger were, in ſome meaſure, continually renewed; the Mexicans repairing in the night what the Spaniards had deſtroyed through the day, and recovering the poſts from which they had driven them. But neceſſity preſcribed this ſlow and untoward mode of operation. The number of his troops was ſo ſmall, that Cortes durſt not, with a handful of men, attempt to make a lodgment in a city where he might be ſurrounded and annoyed by ſuch a multitude of enemies. The remembrance of what he had already ſuffered by the ill-judged confidence with which he had ventured

[c] Cortes Relat. 270, F.

into

into ſuch a dangerous ſituation, was ſtill freſh in his mind. The Spaniards, exhauſted with fatigue, were unable to guard the various poſts which they daily gained; and though their camp was filled with Indian auxiliaries, they durſt not devolve this charge upon them, becauſe they were ſo little accuſtomed to diſcipline, that no confidence could be placed in their vigilance. Beſides this, Cortes was extremely ſolicitous to preſerve the city as much as poſſible from being deſtroyed, both as he deſtined it to be the capital of his conqueſts, and wiſhed that it might remain as a monument of his glory. From all theſe conſiderations, he adhered obſtinately, for a month after the ſiege was opened, to the ſyſtem which he had adopted. The Mexicans, in their own defence, diſplayed valour which was hardly inferior to that with which the Spaniards attacked them. On land, on water, by night and by day, one furious conflict ſucceeded to another. Several Spaniards were killed, more wounded, and all were ready to ſink under the toils of unintermitting ſervice, which were rendered more intolerable by the injuries of the ſeaſon, the periodical rains being now ſet in with their uſual violence [d].

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1521.

Endeavours to take the city by ſtorm.

ASTONISHED and diſconcerted with the length and difficulties of the ſiege, Cortes determined to make one great effort to get poſſeſſion of the city before he relinquiſhed the plan which he had hitherto followed, and had recourſe to any other mode of attack. With this view, he ſent inſtructions to Alvarado and Sandoval to advance with their diviſions to a general aſſault, and took the command in perſon of that poſted on the cauſeway of Cuyocan. Animated by his preſence, and the expectation of ſome deciſive event, the Spaniards puſhed forward with irreſiſtible impetuoſity. They broke

[d] B. Diaz. c. 151.

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through one barricade after another, forced their way over the ditches and canals, and having entered the city, gained ground inceſſantly, in ſpite of the multitude and ferocity of their opponents. Cortes, though delighted with the rapidity of his progreſs, did not forget that he might ſtill find it neceſſary to retreat; and in order to ſecure it, appointed Julian de Alderete, a captain of chief note in the troops which he had received from Hiſpaniola, to fill up the canals and gaps in the cauſeway as the main body advanced. That officer, deeming it inglorious to be thus employed, while his companions were in the heat of action, and the career of victory, neglected the important charge committed to him, and hurried on inconſiderately to mingle with the combatants. The Mexicans, whoſe military attention and ſkill were daily improving, no ſooner obſerved this, than they carried an account of it to their monarch.

Repulſed,

GUATIMOZIN inſtantly diſcerned the conſequences of the error which the Spaniards had committed, and, with admirable preſence of mind, prepared to take advantage of it. He commanded the troops poſted in the front to ſlacken their efforts, in order to allure the Spaniards to puſh forward, while he diſpatched a large body of choſen warriors through different ſtreets, ſome by land, and others by water, towards the great breach in the cauſeway, which had been left open. On a ſignal which he gave, the prieſts in the principal temple ſtruck the great drum conſecrated to the god of war. No ſooner did the Mexicans hear its doleful ſolemn ſound, calculated to inſpire them with contempt of death, and enthuſiaſtic ardour, than they ruſhed upon the enemy with frantic rage. The Spaniards, unable to reſiſt men urged on no leſs by religious fury than hope of ſucceſs, began to retire, at firſt leiſurely, and with a good countenance;

countenance; but as the enemy preſſed on, and their own impatience to eſcape increaſed, the terror and confuſion became ſo general, that when they arrived at the gap in the cauſeway, Spaniards and Tlaſcalans, horſemen and infantry, plunged in promiſcuouſly, while the Mexicans ruſhed upon them fiercely from every ſide, their light canoes carrying them through ſhoals which the brigantines could not approach. In vain did Cortes attempt to ſtop and rally his flying troops; fear rendered them regardleſs of his entreaties or commands. Finding all his endeavours to renew the combat fruitleſs, his next care was to ſave ſome of thoſe who had thrown themſelves into the water; but while thus employed, with more attention to their ſituation than to his own, ſix Mexican captains ſuddenly laid hold of him, and were hurrying him off in triumph; and though two of his officers reſcued him at the expence of their own lives, he received ſeveral dangerous wounds before he could break looſe. Above ſixty Spaniards periſhed in the rout; and what rendered the diſaſter more afflicting, forty of theſe fell alive into the hands of an enemy never known to ſhew mercy to a captive[e].

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with conſiderable loſs.

THE approach of night, though it delivered the dejected Spaniards from the attacks of the enemy, uſhered in, what was hardly leſs grievous, the noiſe of their barbarous triumph, and of the horrid feſtival with which they celebrated their victory. Every quarter of the city was illuminated; the great temple ſhewn with ſuch peculiar ſplendour, that the Spaniards could plainly ſee the people in motion, and the prieſts buſy in

Thoſe who were taken ſacrificed to the god of war.

[e] Cortes Relat. p. 273. B. Diaz. c. 152. Gomara Cron. c. 138. Herrera, dec. iii. lib. 1. c. 20.

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haſtening the preparations for the death of the priſoners. Through the gloom, they fancied that they diſcerned their companions by the whiteneſs of their ſkins, as they were ſtript naked and compelled to dance before the image of the god to whom they were to be offered. They heard the ſhrieks of thoſe who were ſacrificed, and thought that they could diſtinguiſh each unhappy victim, by the well-known ſound of his voice. Imagination added to what they really ſaw or heard, and augmented its horror. The moſt unfeeling melted into tears of compaſſion, and the ſtouteſt heart trembled at the dreadful ſpectacle which they beheld [f].

New ſchemes and efforts of the Mexicans.

CORTES, who, beſides all that he felt in common with his ſoldiers, was oppreſſed with the additional load of anxious reflections natural to a general on ſuch an unexpected calamity, could not, like them, relieve his mind by giving vent to its anguiſh. He was obliged to aſſume an air of tranquillity, in order to revive the ſpirit and hopes of his followers. The juncture, indeed, required an extraordinary exertion of fortitude. The Mexicans, elated with their victory, ſallied out next morning to attack him in his quarters. But they did not rely on the efforts of their own arms alone. They ſent the heads of the Spaniards whom they had ſacrificed to the leading men in the adjacent provinces, and aſſured them that the god of war, appeaſed by the blood of their invaders, which had been ſhed ſo plentifully on his altars, had declared, with an audible voice, that in eight days time thoſe hated enemies ſhould be finally deſtroyed, and peace and proſperity re-eſtabliſhed in the empire.

[f] See NOTE XCII.

A PRE-

A PREDICTION uttered with ſuch confidence, and in terms ſo void of ambiguity, gained univerſal credit among a people prone to ſuperſtition. The zeal of the provinces, which had already declared againſt the Spaniards, augmented, and ſeveral, which had hitherto remained inactive, took arms with enthuſiaſtic ardour, to execute the decrees of the gods. The Indian auxiliaries who had joined Cortes, accuſtomed to venerate the ſame deities with the Mexicans, and to receive the reſponſes of their prieſts with the ſame implicit faith, abandoned the Spaniards as a race of men devoted to certain deſtruction. Even the fidelity of the Tlaſcalans was ſhaken, and the Spaniſh troops were left almoſt alone in their ſtations. Cortes finding that he attempted in vain to diſpel the ſuperſtitious fears of his confederates by argument, took advantage, from the imprudence of thoſe who had framed the prophecy, in fixing its accompliſhment ſo near at hand, to give them a ſtriking demonſtration of its falſity. He ſuſpended all military operations during the period marked out by the oracle. Under cover of the brigantines, which kept the enemy at a diſtance, his troops lay in ſafety, and the fatal term expired without any diſaſter[g].

1521. Cortes deſerted by many of his Indian allies.

HIS allies, aſhamed of their own credulity, returned to their ſtation. Other tribes, judging that the gods who had now deceived the Mexicans, had decreed finally to withdraw their protection from them, joined his ſtandard; and ſuch was the levity of a ſimple people, moved by every ſlight impreſſion, that, in a ſhort time after ſuch a general defection of his confederates, Cortes ſaw himſelf, if we may believe his own account, at the head of a hundred and fifty thouſand Indians.

He regains their friendſhip,

[g] B. Diaz. c. 153. Gomara Cron. c. 138.

Even

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1521. and adopts a new ſyſtem of attack.

Even with ſuch a numerous army, he found it neceſſary to adopt a new and more wary ſyſtem of operation. Inſtead of renewing his attempts to become maſter of the city at once by ſuch bold but dangerous efforts of valour as he had already tried, he made his advances gradually, and with every poſſible precaution againſt expoſing his men to any calamity ſimilar to that which they ſtill bewailed. As the Spaniards puſhed forward, the Indians regularly repaired the cauſeways behind them. As ſoon as they got poſſeſſion of any part of the town, the houſes were inſtantly levelled with the ground. Day by day, the Mexicans, forced to retire, as their enemies gained ground, were hemmed in within more narrow limits. Guatimozin, though unable to ſtop the career of the enemy, continued to defend his capital with obſtinate reſolution, and diſputed every inch of ground. But the Spaniards, having not only varied their mode of attack, but, by order of Cortes, having changed the weapons with which they fought, were again armed with the long Chinantlan ſpears, which they had employed with ſuch ſucceſs againſt Narvaez, and, by the firm array in which this enabled them to range themſelves, they repelled, with little danger, the looſe aſſault of the Mexicans: incredible numbers of them fell in the conflicts which they renewed every day [h]. While war waſted without, famine began to conſume them within the city. The Spaniſh brigantines having the entire command of the lake, rendered it impoſſible to receive any ſupply of proviſions by water. The vaſt number of his Indian auxiliaries enabled Cortes to ſhut up the avenues to the city by land. The ſtores which Guatimozin had laid up were exhauſted, by the multitudes which crould-

[h] Cortes Relat, p. 275, c. 276, F. B. Diaz. c. 153.

ed

ed into the capital, to defend their ſovereign and the temples of their gods. Not only the people, but perſons of the higheſt rank felt the utmoſt diſtreſſes of want. What they ſuffered brought on infections and mortal diſtempers, the laſt calamity that viſits beſieged cities, and which filled up the meaſure of their woes [1]. 1521.

Courage and conſtancy of Guatimozin.

But, under the preſſure of ſo many and ſuch various evils, the ſpirit of Guatimozin remained firm and unſubdued. He rejected, with ſcorn, every overture of peace from Cortes, and diſdaining the idea of ſubmitting to the oppreſſors of his country, determined not to ſurvive its ruin. The Spaniards continued their progreſs. At length all the three diviſions penetrated into the great ſquare in the centre of the city, and made a ſecure lodgment there. Three-fourths of the city were now reduced, and laid in ruins. The remaining quarter was ſo cloſely preſſed, that it could not long withſtand aſſailants who attacked it from their new ſtation with ſuperior advantage, and more aſſured expectation of ſucceſs. The Mexican nobles, ſolicitous to ſave the life of a monarch whom they revered, prevailed on Guatimozin to retire from a place where reſiſtance was now vain, that he might rouſe the more diſtant provinces of the empire to arms, and maintain there a more ſucceſsful ſtruggle with the public enemy. In order to facilitate the execution of this meaſure, they endeavoured to amuſe Cortes with overtures of ſubmiſſion, that, while his attention was employed in adjuſting the articles of pacification, Guatimozin might eſcape unperceived. But they made this attempt upon a leader of greater ſagacity and diſcernment than to be deceived by their arts. Cortes, ſuſpecting their intention, and aware of what mo- July 27.

[1] Cortes Relat. 276, E. 277, F. B. Diaz. 155. Gom. Cron. c. 141.

ment

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ment it was to defeat it, appointed Sandoval, the officer on whoſe vigilance he could moſt perfectly rely, to take the command of the brigantines, with ſtrict injunctions to watch every motion of the enemy. Sandoval, attentive to the charge, obſerving ſome large canoes crouded with people rowing acroſs the lake with extraordinary rapidity, inſtantly gave the ſignal to chace. Garcia Holguin, who commanded the fleeteſt brigantine, ſoon overtook them, and was preparing to fire on the foremoſt canoe, which ſeemed to carry ſome perſon whom all the reſt followed and obeyed. At once the rowers dropt their oars, and all on board, throwing down their arms, conjured him with cries and tears to forbear, as the emperor was there. Holguin eagerly ſeized his prize, and Guatimozin, with a dignified compoſure, gave himſelf up into his hands, requeſting only that no inſult might be offered to the empreſs or his children. When conducted to Cortes, he appeared neither with the ſullen fierceneſs of a barbarian, nor with the dejection of a ſupplicant. "I have done," ſaid he, addreſſing himſelf to the Spaniſh general, "what became a monarch. I have defended my people to the laſt extremity. Nothing now remains but to die. Take this dagger," laying his hand on one which Cortes wore, "plant it in my breaſt, and put an end to a life which can no longer be of uſe [k]."

He is taken priſoner.

Aug. 13. The city ſurrenders.

As ſoon as the fate of their ſovereign was known, the reſiſtance of the Mexicans ceaſed; and Cortes took poſſeſſion of that ſmall part of the capital which yet remained undeſtroyed. Thus terminated the ſiege of Mexico, the moſt memorable event in the conqueſt of America. It continued ſeventy-

[k] Cortes Relat. 279. B. Diaz. c. 156. Gomara Cron. c. 142. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. ii. c. 7.

five

five days, hardly one of which paſſed without ſome extraordinary effort of one party in the attack, or of the other in the defence of a city, on the fate of which both knew that the fortune of the empire depended. As the ſtruggle here was more obſtinate, it was likewiſe more equal than any between the inhabitants of the Old and New Worlds. The great abilities of Guatimozin, the number of his troops, the peculiar ſituation of his capital, ſo far counterbalanced the ſuperiority of the Spaniards in arms and diſcipline, that they muſt have relinquiſhed the enterpriſe, if they had truſted for ſucceſs to themſelves alone. But Mexico was overturned by the jealouſy of neighbours who dreaded its power, and by the revolt of ſubjects impatient to ſhake off its yoke. By their effectual aid, Cortes was enabled to accompliſh what, without ſuch ſupport, he would hardly have ventured to attempt. How much ſoever this account of the reduction of Mexico may detract, on the one hand, from the marvellous relations of ſome Spaniſh writers, by aſcribing that to ſimple and obvious cauſes which they attributed to the romantic valour of their countrymen, it adds, on the other, to the merit and abilities of Cortes, who, under every diſadvantage, acquired ſuch an aſcendant over unknown nations, as to render them inſtruments towards carrying his ſchemes into execution[1].

Smallneſs of the booty, and diſappointment of the Spaniards.

THE exultation of the Spaniards, on accompliſhing this arduous enterpriſe, was at firſt exceſſive. But this was quickly damped by the cruel diſappointment of thoſe ſanguine hopes, which had animated them amidſt ſo many hardſhips and dangers. Inſtead of the inexhauſtible wealth which they expected from becoming maſters of

[1] See NOTE XCIII.

Montezuma's

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Montezuma's treaſures, and the ornaments of ſo many temples, their rapaciouſneſs could collect only an inconſiderable booty amidſt ruins and deſolation [1]. Guatimozin, aware of his impending fate, had ordered what remained of the riches amaſſed by his anceſtors to be thrown into the lake. The Indian auxiliaries, while the Spaniards were engaged in conflict with the enemy, had carried off the moſt valuable part of the ſpoil. The ſum to be divided among the conquerors was ſo ſmall, that many of them diſdained to accept of the pittance which fell to their ſhare, and all murmured and exclaimed; ſome, againſt Cortes and his confidents, whom they ſuſpected of having ſecretly appropriated to their own uſe, a large portion of the riches which ſhould have been brought into the common ſtock; others, againſt Guatimozin, whom they accuſed of obſtinacy, in refuſing to diſcover the place where he had hidden his treaſure.

Guatimozin tortured.

ARGUMENTS, entreaties, and promiſes were employed in order to ſooth them, but with ſo little effect, that Cortes, from ſolicitude to check this growing ſpirit of diſcontent, gave way to a deed which ſtained the glory of all his great actions. Without regarding the former dignity of Guatimozin, or feeling any reverence for thoſe virtues which he had diſplayed, he ſubjected the unhappy monarch, together with his chief favourite, to torture, in order to force from them a diſcovery of the royal treaſures, which it was ſuppoſed they had concealed. Guatimozin bore whatever the refined cruelty of his tormentors could inflict, with the invincible fortitude of an American warrior. His fellow-ſufferer, overcome by the violence of the

[1] The gold and ſilver, according to Cortes, amounted only to 120,000 peſos, Relat. 280. A. a ſum far inferior to that which the Spaniards had formerly divided in Mexico.

anguiſh,

anguiſh, turned a dejected eye towards his maſter, which ſeemed to implore his permiſſion to reveal all that he knew. But the high-ſpirited prince, darting on him a look of authority mingled with ſcorn, checked his weakneſs by aſking, "Am I now repoſing on a bed of flowers?" Overawed by the reproach, he perſevered in his dutiful ſilence, and expired. Cortes, aſhamed of a ſcene ſo horrid, reſcued the royal victim from the hands of his torturers, and prolonged a life reſerved for new indignities and ſufferings [m]. 1521.

All the provinces of the empire ſubmit.

THE fate of the capital, as both parties had foreſeen, decided that of the empire. The provinces ſubmitted one after another to the conquerors. Small detachments of Spaniards marching through them without interruption, penetrated in different quarters to the great Southern Ocean, which, according to the ideas of Columbus, they imagined would open a ſhort as well as eaſy paſſage to the Eaſt Indies, and ſecure to the crown of Caſtile all the envied wealth of thoſe fertile regions [n]; and the active mind of Cortes began already to form ſchemes for attempting this important diſcovery [o].

Cortes forms ſchemes of new diſcoveries,

which are completed by Magellan.

HE did not know, that during the progreſs of his victorious arms in Mexico, the very ſcheme, of which he began to form ſome idea, had been undertaken and accompliſhed. As this is one of the moſt ſplendid events in the hiſtory of the Spaniſh diſcoveries, and has been productive of effects peculiarly intereſting to thoſe extenſive provinces which Cortes had now ſubjected to the crown of Caſtile, the account of its riſe and progreſs merits a particular detail.

[m] B. Diaz. c. 157. Gomara Cron. c. 146. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. ii. c. 8. Torquem. Mon. Ind. i. 574. [n] Cortes Relat. 280 D, &c. B. Diaz. c. 157. [o] Herrera, dec. 3. lib. ii. c. 17. Gomara Cron. c. 149.

FERDINAND

BOOK V.

1521. FERDINAND MAGALHAENS, or Magellan, a Portugueſe gentleman of honourable birth, having ſerved ſeveral years in the Eaſt Indies, with diſtinguiſhed valour, under the famous Albuquerque, demanded the recompence which he thought due to his ſervices, with a boldneſs natural to a high-ſpirited ſoldier. But, for ſome reaſon which is not explained, both his general and his ſovereign rejected his ſuit with a diſdainful coldneſs, that was intolerable to a man conſcious of what he had done, and of what he deſerved. In a tranſport of reſentment, he formally renounced his allegiance to an
1517. ungrateful maſter, and fled to the court of Caſtile, in hopes that there his worth would be more juſtly eſtimated. He endeavoured to recommend himſelf by propoſing to execute a ſcheme, the accompliſhment of which, he knew, would wound the monarch againſt whom he was exaſperated, in the moſt tender part. He revived Columbus's original and favourite project, of diſcovering a paſſage to India by a weſterly courſe, and without encroaching on that portion of the globe which was allotted to the Portugueſe by the line of demarcation. He founded his hopes of ſucceſs on the ideas of that great navigator, confirmed by many obſervations, the reſult of his own naval experience, as well as that of his countrymen, in their intercourſe with the Eaſt. The undertaking, he acknowledged, was both arduous and expenſive, as it could not be attempted but with a ſquadron of conſiderable force, and victualled for at leaſt two years. Fortunately, he applied to a miniſter who was not apt to be deterred, either by the boldneſs of a deſign, or the expence of carrying it into execution. Cardinal Ximenes, who at that time directed the affairs of Spain, diſcerning at once what an increaſe of wealth and glory would accrue to his country by the ſucceſs of Magellan's propoſal, liſtened to it with a moſt favourable ear. Charles V. on his arrival

rival in his Spaniſh dominions, entered into the meaſure with no leſs ardour, and orders were iſſued for equipping a proper ſquadron at the public charge, of which the command was given to Magellan, whom the king honoured with the habit of St. Jago and the title of Captain General [P]. BOOK V. 1521.

His voyage.

On the tenth of Auguſt one thouſand five hundred and nineteen, Magellan ſailed from Seville with five ſhips, which, according to the ideas of the age, were deemed to be of conſiderable force, though the burden of the largeſt did not exceed one hundred and twenty tons. The crews of the whole amounted to two hundred and thirty-four men, among whom were ſome of the moſt ſkilful pilots in Spain, and ſeveral Portugueſe ſailors, in whoſe experience, as more extenſive, Magellan placed ſtill greater confidence. After touching at the Canaries, he ſtood directly ſouth towards the equinoctial line along the coaſt of America, but was ſo long retarded by tedious calms, and ſpent ſo much time in ſearching every bay and inlet for that communication with the Southern Ocean which he wiſhed to diſcover, that he did not reach the river De la Plata till the twelfth of January. 1520. That ſpacious opening, through which its vaſt body of water pours into the Atlantic, allured him to enter; but, after ſailing up it for ſome days, he concluded, from the ſhallowneſs of the ſtream and the freſhneſs of the water, that the wiſhed-for ſtrait was not ſituated there, and continued his courſe towards the ſouth. On the thirty-firſt of March he arrived at the port of St. Julian, about forty-eight degrees ſouth of the line, where he reſolved to winter. In this uncomfortable ſtation he loſt one of his ſquadron, and the Spaniards ſuf-

[P] Herrera, dec. 2. lib. ii. c. 19. lib. iv. c. 9. Gomara Hiſt. c. 91.

fered

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fered ſo much from the exceſſive rigour of the climate, that the crews of three of his ſhips, headed by their officers, roſe in open mutiny, and inſiſted on relinquiſhing the viſionary project of a deſperate adventurer, and returning directly to Spain. This dangerous inſurrection Magellan ſuppreſſed, by an effort of courage no leſs prompt than intrepid, and inflicted exemplary puniſhment on the ringleaders. With the remainder of his followers, overawed but not reconciled to his ſcheme, he continued his voyage towards the ſouth, and at length diſcovered, near the fifty-third degree of latitude, the mouth of a ſtrait, into which he entered, notwithſtanding the murmurs and remonſtrances of the people under his command. After ſailing twenty days in that winding dangerous channel, to which he gave his own name, and where one of his ſhips deſerted him, the great Southern Ocean opened to his view, and with tears of joy he returned thanks to Heaven for having thus far crowned his endeavours with ſucceſs [9].

But he was ſtill at a greater diſtance than he imagined from the object of his wiſhes. He ſailed during three months and twenty days in an uniform direction towards the north-weſt, without diſcovering land. In this voyage, the longeſt that had ever been made in the unbounded ocean, he ſuffered incredible diſtreſs. His ſtock of proviſions was almoſt exhauſted, the water became putrid, the men were reduced to the ſhorteſt allowance with which it was poſſible to ſuſtain life, and the ſcurvy, the moſt dreadful of all the maladies with which ſeafaring people are afflicted, began to ſpread among the crew. One circumſtance alone afforded them ſome conſolation; they enjoyed an uninterrupted courſe of fair weather with ſuch favourable

9 Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iv. c. 10. lib. ix. c. 10, &c. Gomara Hiſt. c. 92. Pigafetta Viaggio ap Ramuſ. ii. p. 352, &c.

winds,

winds, that Magellan beſtowed on that ocean the name of Pacific, which it ſtill retains. When reduced to ſuch extremity that they muſt have ſunk under their ſufferings, they fell in with a cluſter of ſmall but fertile iſlands, which afforded them refreſhments in ſuch abundance, that their health was ſoon re-eſtabliſhed. From theſe iſles, to which he gave the name of *De los Ladrones*, he proceeded on his voyage, and ſoon made a more important diſcovery of the iſlands now known by the name of the *Philippines*. In one of theſe he got into an unfortunate quarrel with the natives, who attacked him with a numerous body of troops well armed; and while he fought at the head of his men with his uſual valour, he fell by the hands of thoſe barbarians, together with ſeveral of his principal officers.

1521. March 6.

April 26.

THE expedition was proſecuted under other commanders. After viſiting many of the ſmaller iſles ſcattered in the eaſtern part of the Indian ocean, they touched at the great iſland of Borneo, and at length landed in Tidore, one of the Moluccas, to the aſtoniſhment of the Portugueſe, who could not comprehend how the Spaniards, by holding a weſterly courſe, had arrived at that ſequeſtered ſeat of their moſt valuable commerce, which they themſelves had diſcovered by ſailing in an oppoſite direction. There, and in the adjacent iſles, they found a people acquainted with the benefits of extenſive trade, and willing to open an intercourſe with a new nation. They took in a cargo of the precious ſpices, which are the diſtinguiſhed production of thoſe iſlands, and with that, as well as with ſpecimens of the rich commodities yielded by the other countries which they had viſited, the *Victory*, which, of the two ſhips that remained of the ſquadron, was moſt fit for a long voyage, ſet ſail for

Nov. 8.

Jan. 1522.

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1521.

for Europe, under the command of Juan Sebaſtian del Cano. He followed the courſe of the Portugueſe by the Cape of Good Hope, and, after many diſaſters and ſufferings, he arrived at St. Lucar on the ſeventh of September one thouſand five hundred and twenty-two, having ſailed round the globe in the ſpace of three years and twenty-eight days [q].

THOUGH an untimely fate deprived Magellan of the ſatisfaction of accompliſhing this great undertaking, his contemporaries, juſt to his memory and talents, aſcribed to him not only the glory of having formed the plan, but of having ſurmounted almoſt every obſtacle to the completion of it; and in the preſent age his name is ſtill ranked among the higheſt in the roll of eminent and ſucceſsful navigators. The naval glory of Spain now eclipſed that of every other nation, and by a ſingular felicity ſhe had the merit, in the courſe of a few years, of diſcovering a new continent almoſt as large as that part of the earth which was formerly known, and of aſcertaining by experience the form and extent of the whole terraqueous globe.

THE Spaniards were not ſatisfied with the glory of having firſt encompaſſed the earth, they expected to derive great commercial advantages from this new and boldeſt effort of their maritime ſkill. The men of ſcience among them contended, that the ſpice iſlands, and ſeveral of the richeſt countries in the Eaſt, were ſo ſituated as to belong of right to the crown of Caſtile, in conſequence of the partition made by Alexander VI. The merchants, without attending to this diſcuſſion, engaged eagerly in that lucrative and alluring commerce, which was

[q] Herrera, dec. 3. lib. i. c. 3. 9. lib. iv. c. 1. Gomara Cron. c. 93, &c. Pigafetta ap. Ramuſ. ii. p. 361, &c.

now

now opened to them. The Portugueſe, alarmed at the intruſion of ſuch formidable rivals, remonſtrated and negociated in Europe, while in Aſia they obſtructed the trade of the Spaniards by force of arms. Charles, not ſufficiently inſtructed with reſpect to the importance of this valuable branch of commerce, or diſtracted by the multiplicity of his ſchemes and operations, did not afford his ſubjects proper protection. At laſt, the low ſtate of his finances, exhauſted by the efforts of his arms in every part of Europe, together with the dread of adding a new war with Portugal to thoſe in which he was already engaged, induced him to make over his claim of the Moluccas to the Portugueſe for three hundred and fifty thouſand ducats. He reſerved, however, to the crown of Caſtile the right of reviving its pretenſions on repayment of that ſum; but other objects engroſſed his attention and that of his ſucceſſors, and Spain was finally excluded from a branch of commerce in which it was engaging with ſanguine expectations of profit [r].

1521.

THOUGH the trade with the Moluccas was relinquiſhed, the voyage of Magellan was followed by commercial effects of great moment in Spain. Philip II. in the year one thouſand five hundred and ſixty-four, reduced thoſe iſlands which he diſcovered in the Eaſtern Ocean to ſubjection, and eſtabliſhed ſettlements there; between which and the kingdom of New Spain a regular intercourſe, the matter of which ſhall be explained in its proper place, is carried on. I return now to the tranſactions in New Spain.

AT the time that Cortes was acquiring ſuch vaſt territories for his native country, and preparing the

An order to ſuperſede Cortes;

[r] Herrera, dec. 3. lib. vii. c. 5, &c. dec. iv. lib. v. c. 7, &c.

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1521.

way for future conqueſts, it was his ſingular fate not only to be deſtitute of any commiſſion or authority from the ſovereign whom he was ſerving with ſuch ſucceſsful zeal, but to be regarded as an undutiful and ſeditious ſubject. By the influence of Fonſeca, biſhop of Burgos, his conduct in aſſuming the government of New Spain was declared to be an irregular uſurpation, in contempt of the royal authority; and Chriſtoval de Tapia received a commiſſion, impowering him to ſuperſede Cortes, to ſeize his perſon, to confiſcate his effects, to make a ſtrict ſcrutiny into his proceedings, and to tranſmit the reſult of his inquiries to the council of the Indies, of which the biſhop of Burgos was preſident. A few weeks after the reduction of Mexico, Tapia landed at Vera Cruz with the royal mandate to ſtrip its conqueror of his power, and to treat him as a criminal. But Fonſeca had choſen a very improper inſtrument to wreak his vengeance on Cortes. Tapia had neither the reputation nor the talents that ſuited the high command to which he was appointed.

which he eludes.

Cortes, while he publicly expreſſed the moſt reſpectful veneration for the emperor's authority, ſecretly took meaſures to defeat the effect of his commiſſion; and having involved Tapia and his followers in a multiplicity of negociations and conferences, in which he ſometimes had recourſe to threats, but more frequently employed bribes and promiſes, he at length prevailed on that weak man to abandon a province which he was unworthy of governing [t].

Applies again to the court, 1522. May 15.

But notwithſtanding the fortunate dexterity with which he had eluded this blow, Cortes was ſo ſenſible of the precarious tenure by which he held his power, that he diſpatched deputies to Spain with a

[t] Herrera, dec. 3. lib. iii. c. 16. dec. iv. c. 1. Cort. Relat. 281. E. B. Diaz. c. 158.

pompous

pompous account of the ſucceſs of his arms, with farther ſpecimens of the productions of the country, and with rich preſents to the emperor, as the earneſt of future contributions from his new conqueſt; requeſting, in recompence for all his ſervices, the approbation of his proceedings, and that he might be entruſted with the government of thoſe territories, which his conduct, and the valour of his followers, had added to the crown of Caſtile. The juncture in which his deputies reached the court was favourable. The internal commotions in Spain, which had diſquieted the beginning of Charles's reign were juſt appeaſed [u]. The miniſters had leiſure to turn their attention towards foreign affairs. The account of Cortes's victories filled his countrymen with admiration. The extent and value of his conqueſts became the object of vaſt and intereſting hopes. Whatever ſtain he might have contracted, by the irregularity of the ſteps which he took in order to attain power, was ſo fully effaced by the ſplendour and merit of the great actions which this had enabled him to perform, that every heart revolted at the thought of inflicting any cenſure on a man, whoſe ſervices entitled him to the higheſt marks of diſtinction. The public voice declared warmly in favour of his pretenſions, and Charles arriving in Spain about this time, adopted the ſentiments of his ſubjects with a youthful ardour. Notwithſtanding the claims of Velaſquez, and the partial repreſentations of the biſhop of Burgos, he appointed Cortes captain-general and governor of New Spain, judging that no perſon was ſo capable of maintaining the royal authority, or of eſtabliſhing good order both among his Spaniſh and Indian ſubjects, as the commander whom the forme rwould willingly obey,

1522.

and is appointed Captain-General and Governor of New Spain.

[u] Hiſt. of Charles V. vol. ii. b. iii.

BOOK V. and the latter had long been accuſtomed to fear and to reſpect [x].

1522. His ſchemes and arrangements.

EVEN before his juriſdiction received this legal ſanction, Cortes ventured to exerciſe all the powers of a governor, and, by various arrangements, endeavoured to render his conqueſt a ſecure and beneficial acquiſition to his country. He determined to eſtabliſh the ſeat of government in its ancient ſtation, and to raiſe Mexico again from its ruins; and having conceived high ideas concerning the future grandeur of the ſtate of which he was laying the foundation, he began to rebuild its capital on a plan which hath gradually formed the moſt magnificent city in the New World. At the ſame time, he employed ſkilful perſons to ſearch for mines in different parts of the country, and opened ſome which were found to be richer than any which the Spaniards had hitherto diſcovered in America. He detached his principal officers into the remote provinces, and encouraged them to ſettle there, not only by beſtowing upon them large tracts of land, but by granting them the ſame dominion over the Indians, and the ſame right to their ſervice which the Spaniards had aſſumed in the iſlands.

Inſurrections of the Mexicans, and cruelty of the Spaniards.

IT was not, however, without difficulty that the Mexican empire could be entirely reduced into the form of a Spaniſh colony. Enraged and rendered deſperate by oppreſſion, the natives often forgot the ſuperiority of their enemies, and run to arms in defence of their liberties. In every conteſt, however, the European valour and diſcipline prevailed. But, fatally for the honour of their country, the Spaniards ſullied the glory redounding from theſe repeat-

[x] Herrera, dec. 3. lib. iv. c. 3. Gomara Cron. 164, 165. B. Diaz, 167, 168.

ed

1522.

ed victories by their mode of treating the vanquiſhed people. After taking Guatimozin, and becoming maſters of his capital, they ſuppoſed that the king of Caſtile entered on poſſeſſion of all the rights of the captive monarch, and affected to conſider every effort of the Mexicans to aſſert their own independence, as the rebellion of vaſſals againſt their ſovereign, or the mutiny of ſlaves againſt their maſter. Under the ſanction of thoſe ill-founded maxims, they violated every right that ſhould be held ſacred between hoſtile nations. After every inſurrection, they reduced the common people in the provinces which they ſubdued, to the moſt humiliating of all conditions, that of perſonal ſervitude. Their chiefs, ſuppoſed to be more criminal, were puniſhed with greater ſeverity, and put to death in the moſt ignominious or the moſt excruciating form, that the inſolence or the cruelty of their conquerors could deviſe. In almoſt every province of the Mexican empire, the progreſs of the Spaniſh arms is marked with blood, and with deeds ſo atrocious as diſgrace the enterpriſing valour that conducted them to ſucceſs. In the province of Panuco, ſixty caziques, or leaders, and four hundred nobles, were burnt at one time. Nor was this ſhocking barbarity perpetrated in any ſudden ſally of rage, or by a commander of inferior note. It was the act of Sandoval, an officer whoſe name is entitled to the ſecond rank in the annals of New Spain, executed after a ſolemn conſultation with Cortes; and to complete the horror of the ſcene, the children and relations of the wretched victims were aſſembled, and compelled to be ſpectators of their dying agonies[y]. It ſeems hardly poſſible to exceed in horror this dreadful example of ſeverity; but it was followed by another, which affected the

[y] Cortes Relat. 291, C. Gomara Cron, c. 155.

Mexicans

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Mexicans ſtill more ſenſibly, as it gave them a moſt feeling proof of their own degradation, and of the ſmall regard that their haughty maſters retained for the ancient dignity and ſplendour of their ſtate. On a ſlight ſuſpicion, confirmed by very imperfect evidence, that Guatimozin had formed a ſcheme to ſhake off the yoke, and to excite his former ſubjects to take arms, Cortes, without the formality of a trial, ordered the unhappy monarch, together with the caziques of Tezeuco and Tacuba, the two perſons of greateſt eminence in the empire, to be hanged; and the Mexicans, with aſtoniſhment and horror, beheld this ignominious puniſhment inflicted upon perſons, to whom they were accuſtomed to look up with reverence, hardly inferior to that which they paid to the gods themſelves [z]. The example of Cortes and his principal officers, encouraged and juſtified perſons of ſubordinate rank to venture upon committing greater exceſſes. Nuno de Guzman, in particular, ſtained an illuſtrious name by deeds of peculiar enormity and rigour, in various expeditions which he conducted [a].

One circumſtance, however, ſaved the Mexicans from farther conſumption, perhaps from one as complete as that which had depopulated the iſlands. The firſt conquerors did not attempt to ſearch for the precious metals in the bowels of the earth. They were neither ſufficiently wealthy to carry on the expenſive works, which are requiſite for opening thoſe deep receſſes where Nature has concealed the veins of gold and ſilver, nor ſufficiently ſkilful to perform the ingenious operations by which they are ſeparated from their reſpective ores. They were ſatisfied

[z] Gomara Cron. c. 170. B. Diaz. c. 177. Herrera, dec. 3. lib. viii. c. 9. See NOTE XCIV.

[a] Herrera, dec. 4 and 5. paſſim.

with

with the more ſimple method, practiſed by the Indians, of waſhing the earth carried down rivers and torrents from the mountains, and collecting the grains of native metal depoſited there. The rich mines of New Spain, which have poured forth their treaſures with ſuch profuſion on every quarter of the globe were not diſcovered for ſeveral years after the conqueſt [b]. By that time, a more orderly government and police were introduced into the colony; experience, derived from former errors, had ſuggeſted many uſeful and humane regulations for the protection and preſervation of the Indians; and though it then became neceſſary to encreaſe the number of thoſe employed in the mines, and they were engaged in a ſpecies of labour more pernicious to the human conſtitution, they ſuffered leſs hardſhip or diminution than from the ill-judged, but leſs extenſive, ſchemes of the firſt conquerors.

1522.

1552, &c.

THIS extraordinary mortality among the Indians, diſappointed the hopes of their new maſters. Few ſeem to have derived any conſiderable wealth from their ill-conducted reſearches. According to the uſual fate of firſt ſettlers in new colonies, it was their lot to encounter danger and to ſtruggle with difficulties; the fruits of their victories and toils were reſerved for times of tranquillity, and reaped by ſucceſſors of greater induſtry, but of inferior merit. The early hiſtorians of America abound with accounts of the ſufferings and of the poverty of its conquerors [c]. In New Spain, their condition was rendered more grievous by a peculiar arrangement. When Charles V. advanced Cortes to the government of that country, he, at the ſame time, appointed certain commiſſioners to receive and ad-

[b] Herrera, dec. 8. lib. x. c. 21. [c] Cortes Relat. 283, F. B. Diaz. c. 209.

miniſter

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miniſter the royal revenue there, with independent juriſdiction [d]. Theſe men, choſen from inferior ſtations in various departments of public buſineſs at Madrid, were ſo much elevated with their promotion, that they thought they were called to act a part of the firſt conſequence. But being accuſtomed to the minute formalities of office, and having contracted the narrow ideas ſuited to the ſphere in which they had hitherto moved, they were aſtoniſhed, on arriving in Mexico, at the high authority which Cortes exerciſed, and could not conceive that the mode of adminiſtration, in a country recently ſubdued and ſettled, muſt be different from that which took place in one where tranquillity and regular government had been long eſtabliſhed. In their letters, they repreſented Cortes as an ambitious tyrant, who having uſurped a juriſdiction ſuperior to law, aſpired at independence, and by his exorbitant wealth and extenſive influence, might accompliſh thoſe diſloyal ſchemes which he apparently meditated [e]. Theſe inſinuations made ſuch deep impreſſion upon the Spaniſh miniſters, moſt of whom had been formed to buſineſs under the jealous and rigid adminiſtration of Ferdinand, that, unmindful of all Cortes's paſt ſervices, and regardleſs of what he was then ſuffering in conducting that extraordinary expedition, in which he advanced from the lake of Mexico to the weſtern extremities of Honduras [f], they infuſed the ſame ſuſpicions into the mind of their maſter, and prevailed on him to order a ſolemn inqueſt to be made into his conduct, with powers to the licenciate Ponce de Leon, entruſted with that commiſſion, to ſeize his perſon, if he ſhould find that expedient, and ſend him priſoner to Spain [g].

1523.

1524.

1525.

[d] Herrera, dec. 3. lib. iv. c. 3. [e] Id. dec. 3. lib. v. c. 14.
[f] See NOTE XCV. [g] Herrera, dec. 3. lib. viii. c. 14, 15.

THE

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THE ſudden death of Ponce de Leon, a few days after his arrival in New Spain, prevented the execution of this commiſſion. But as the object of his appointment was known, the mind of Cortes was deeply wounded with this unexpected return for ſervices which far exceeded whatever any ſubject of Spain had rendered to his ſovereign. He endeavoured, however, to maintain his ſtation, and to recover the confidence of the court. But every perſon in office, who had arrived from Spain ſince the conqueſt, was a ſpy upon his conduct, and with malicious ingenuity gave an unfavourable repreſentation of all his actions. The apprehenſions of Charles and his miniſters increaſed. A new commiſſion of inquiry was iſſued, with more extenſive powers, and various precautions were taken to prevent or to puniſh him, if he ſhould be ſo preſumptuous as to attempt what was inconſiſtent with the fidelity of a ſubject [h]. Cortes beheld the approaching criſis of his fortune with all the violent emotions natural to a haughty mind, conſcious of high deſert, and receiving unworthy treatment. But though ſome of his deſperate followers urged him to aſſert his own rights againſt his ungrateful country, and, with a bold hand, to ſeize that power which the courtiers meanly accuſed him of coveting [i], he retained ſuch ſelf-command, or was actuated with ſuch ſentiments of loyalty, as to reject their dangerous counſels, and to chuſe the only courſe in which he could ſecure his own dignity, without departing from his duty. He reſolved not to expoſe himſelf to the ignominy of a trial, in that country which had been the ſcene of his triumphs; but, without waiting for the arrival of his judges, to repair directly to Caſtile,

1525.

1528.

[h] Herrera, dec. 3. lib. viii. c. 15. dec. 4. lib. ii. c. 1. lib. iv. c. 9, 10. B. Diaz, c. 172, 196. Gomara Cron. c. 166.

[i] B. Diaz. c. 194.

and

BOOK V. and commit himſelf and his cauſe to the juſtice and generoſity of his ſovereign [k].

1528. Cortes appeared in his native country with the ſplendour that ſuited the conqueror of a mighty kingdom. He brought with him a great part of his wealth, many jewels and ornaments of great value, ſeveral curious productions of the country [l], and was attended by ſome Mexicans of the firſt rank, as well as by the moſt conſiderable of his own officers. His arrival in Spain removed at once every ſuſpicion and fear that had been entertained with reſpect to his intentions. The emperor, having now nothing to apprehend from the deſigns of Cortes, received him like a perſon whom conſciouſneſs of his own innocence had brought into the preſence of his maſter, and who was intitled, by the eminence of his ſervices, to the higheſt marks of diſtinction and reſpect. The order of St. Jago, the title of Marquis del Valle de Guaxaca, the grant of a vaſt territory in New Spain, were ſucceſſively beſtowed upon him; and as his manners were correct and elegant, although he had paſſed the greater part of his life among rough adventurers, the emperor admitted him to the ſame familiar intercourſe with himſelf, that was enjoyed by noblemen of the firſt rank [m].

But, amidſt thoſe external proofs of regard, ſymptoms of remaining diſtruſt appeared. Though Cortes earneſtly ſolicited to be reinſtated in the government of New Spain, Charles, too ſagacious to commit ſuch an important charge to a man whom he had once ſuſpected, peremptorily refuſed to inveſt him again with powers which he might find it

[k] Herrera, dec. 3. lib. iv. c. 8. [l] See NOTE XCVI.
[m] Herrera, dec. 3. lib. iv. c. 1. lib. vi. c. 4. B. Diaz, c. 196. Gom. Cron. c. 182.

impoſſible

impoſſible to controul. Cortes, though dignified with new titles, returned to Mexico with diminiſhed authority. The military department, with powers to attempt new diſcoveries, was left in his hands; but the ſupreme direction of civil affairs was placed in a board called *The Audience of New Spain*. At a ſubſequent period, when, upon the increaſe of the colony, the exertion of authority more united and extenſive become neceſſary, Antonio de Mendoza, a nobleman of high rank, was ſent thither as *Viceroy*, to take the government into his hands. BOOK V. 1530.

THIS diviſion of power in New Spain proved, as was unavoidable, the ſource of perpetual diſſention, which embittered the life of Cortes, and thwarted all his ſchemes. As he had now no opportunity to diſplay his active talents but in attempting new diſcoveries, he formed various ſchemes for that purpoſe, all of which bear impreſſions of a genius that delighted in what was bold and ſplendid. He early entertained an idea, that, either by ſteering through the gulf of Florida along the eaſt coaſt of North America, ſome ſtrait would be found that communicated with the weſtern ocean; or that, by examining the iſthmus of Darien, ſome paſſage would be diſcovered between the North and South Seas [n]. But having been diſappointed in his expectations with reſpect to both, he now confined his views to ſuch voyages of diſcovery as he could make from the ports of New Spain in the South Sea. There he fitted out ſucceſſively ſeveral ſmall ſquadrons, which either periſhed in the attempt, or returned without making any diſcovery of moment. Cortes, weary of entruſting the conduct of his operations to others, took the command of a new ar- 1536.

[n] Cortes Relat. Ram. iii. 294, B.

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BOOK V.

mament enduring incredible hardſhips, and encountering dangers of every ſpecies, he diſcovered the large peninſula of California, and ſurveyed the greater part of the gulf which ſeparates it from New Spain. The diſcovery of a country of ſuch extent would have reflected credit on a common adventurer; but it could add little new honour to the name of Cortes, nor ſatisfy the ſanguine expectations which he had formed [o]. Diſguſted with ill ſucceſs, to which he had not been accuſtomed, and weary of conteſting with adverſaries to whom he conſidered it as a diſgrace to be oppoſed, he once more ſought for redreſs in his native country.

1536.

1540.

But his reception there was very different from that which gratitude, and even decency, ought to have ſecured for him. The merit of his ancient exploits was already, in a great meaſure, forgotten, or eclipſed by the fame of recent and more valuable conqueſts in another quarter of America. No ſervice of moment was now expected from a man of declining years, and who began to be unfortunate. The emperor behaved to him with cold civility; his miniſters treated him, ſometimes with neglect, ſometimes with inſolence. His grievances received no redreſs; his claims were urged without effect; and after ſeveral years ſpent in fruitleſs application to miniſters and judges, an occupation the moſt irkſome and mortifying to a man of high ſpirit, who had moved in a ſphere where he was more accuſtomed to command than to ſolicit, Cortes ended his days on the ſecond of December one thouſand five hundred and forty-ſeven, in the ſixty-ſecond

[o] Herrera, dec. 5. lib. viii. c. 9, 10. dec. 8. lib. vi. c. 14: Venegas Hiſt. of Californ. i. 125. Lorenzana Hiſt. p. 322, &c.

year

year of his age. His fate was the ſame with that of all the perſons who diſtinguiſhed themſelves in the diſcovery or conqueſt of the New World. Envied by his contemporaries, and ill requited by the court which he ſerved, he has been admired and celebrated by ſucceeding ages. Which has formed the moſt juſt eſtimate of his character, an impartial conſideration of his actions muſt determine.

NOTES

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year of his age. His name will be ever fresh in the memory of all the perſons who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves in the diſcovery or conqueſt of the New World. Envied by his contemporaries, and ill requited by the court which he ſerved, he has been admired and celebrated by ſucceeding ages. Which has formed the moſt juſt eſtimate of his character, an impartial conſideration of his actions muſt determine.

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NOTE I. p. 3.

THE height of the moſt elevated point in the Pyrenees is, according to M. Caſſini, ſix thouſand ſix hundred and forty-ſix feet. The height of the mountain Gemmi, in the canton of Berne, is ten thouſand one hundred and ten feet. The height of the Pike of Teneriffe, according to the meaſurement of P. Feuillé, is thirteen thouſand one hundred and ſeventy-eight feet. The height of Chimborazo, the moſt elevated point of the Andes, is twenty thouſand two hundred and eighty feet. Voyage de D. Juan Ulloa, Obſervations Aſtron. et Phyſiq. tom. ii. p. 114. The height of that part of Chimborazo which is covered perpetually with ſnow, is two thouſand four hundred feet. Prevot. Hiſt. Gener. des Voyages, vol. xiii. p. 636.

NOTE II. p. 3.

AS a particular deſcription makes a ſtronger impreſſion than general aſſertions, I ſhall give one of Rio de la Plata by an eye-witneſs. P. Cattaneo, a Modeneſe jeſuit, landed at Buenos Ayres in 1749, and thus repreſents what he felt when ſuch new objects were firſt preſented to his view. "While I reſided in Europe, and read in books of hiſtory or geography that the mouth of the river De la Plata was an hundred and fifty miles in breadth, I conſidered it as an exaggeration, becauſe

in this hemiſphere we have no example of ſuch vaſt rivers. When I approached its mouth, I had the moſt vehement deſire to aſcertain the truth with my own eyes, and I have found the matter to be exactly as it was repreſented. This I deduce particularly from one circumſtance: When we took our departure from Monte-Vieo, a fort ſituated more than a hundred miles from the mouth of the river, and where its breadth is conſiderably diminiſhed, we ſailed a complete day before we diſcovered the land on the oppoſite bank of the river; and when we were in the middle of the channel, we could not diſcern land on either ſide, and ſaw nothing but the ſky and water, as if we had been in ſome great ocean. Indeed, we ſhould have taken it to be ſea, if the freſh water of the river, which was turbid like the Po, had not ſatisfied us that it was a river. Moreover, at Buenos Ayres, another hundred miles up the river, and where it is ſtill much narrower, one cannot diſcern the oppoſite coaſt, which is indeed very low and flat; but one cannot perceive the houſes or the tops of the ſteeples in the Portugueſe ſettlement at Colonia on the other ſide of the river." Lettera prima, publiſhed by Muratori, Il Chriſtianeſimo Felice, &c. i. p. 257.

NOTE III. p. 6.

NEWFOUNDLAND, part of Nova Scotia and Canada, are the countries which lie in the ſame parallel of latitude with the kingdom of France; and in all of them the water of the rivers is frozen during winter to the thickneſs of ſeveral feet; the earth is covered with ſnow as deep; almoſt all the birds fly, during that ſeaſon, from a climate where they could not live. The country of the Eſkimaux, part of Labrador, and the countries on the ſouth of Hudſon's Bay, are in the ſame parallel with Great Britain; and yet in all theſe the cold is ſo intenſe, that even the induſtry of Europeans has not attempted cultivation.

NOTE



NOTE IV. p. 8.

ACOSTA is the firſt philoſopher, as far as I know, who endeavoured to account for the different degrees of heat in the old and new continents, by the agency of the winds which blow in each. Hiſt. Moral. &c. lib. ii. & iii. M. de Buffon adopts this theory, and has not only improved it by new obſervations, but has employed his amazing powers of deſcriptive eloquence in embelliſhing and placing it in the moſt ſtriking light. Some remarks may be added, which tend to illuſtrate more fully a doctrine of much importance in every inquiry concerning the temperature of various climates.

WHEN a cold wind blows over land, it muſt in its paſſage rob the ſurface of ſome of its heat. By means of this, the coldneſs of the wind is abated. But if it continue to blow in the ſame direction, it will come, by degrees, to paſs over a ſurface already cooled, and will ſuffer no longer any abatement of its own keenneſs. Thus, as it advances over a large tract of land, it brings on all the ſeverity of intenſe froſt.

LET the ſame wind blow over an extenſive and deep ſea; the ſuperficial water muſt be immediately cooled to a certain degree, and the wind proportionally warmed. But the ſuperficial and colder water becoming ſpecifically heavier than the warmer water below it, deſcends; what is warmer ſupplies its place, which, as it comes to be cooled in its turn, continues to warm the air which paſſes over it, or to diminiſh its cold. This change of the ſuperficial water, and ſucceſſive aſcent of that which is warmer, and conſequent ſucceſſive abatement of coldneſs in the air, is aided by the agitation cauſed in the ſea by the mechanical action of the wind, and alſo by the motion of the tides. This will go on, and the rigour of the wind will continue to diminiſh until the whole water is ſo far cooled, that the water on the ſurface is no longer removed from the action of the wind, faſt enough to hinder it from being arreſted by froſt. Whenever the ſur-

face freezes, the wind is no longer warmed by the water from below, and it goes on with undiminiſhed cold.

FROM thoſe principles may be explained the ſeverity of winter froſts in extenſive continents; their mildneſs in ſmall iſlands; and the ſuperior rigour of winter in thoſe parts of North America with which we are beſt acquainted. In the north-weſt parts of Europe, the ſeverity of winter is mitigated by the weſt winds, which uſually blow in the months of November, December, and part of January.

ON the other hand, when a warm wind blows over land, it heats the ſurface, which muſt therefore ceaſe to abate the fervour of the wind. But the ſame wind blowing over water, agitates it, brings up the colder water from below, and thus is continually loſing ſomewhat of its own heat.

BUT the great power of the ſea to mitigate the heat of the wind or air paſſing over it, proceeds from the following circumſtance, that on account of the tranſparency of the ſea, its ſurface cannot be heated to a great degree by the ſun's rays; whereas the ground, ſubjected to their influence, very ſoon acquires great heat. When, therefore, the wind blows over a torrid continent, it is ſoon raiſed to a heat almoſt intolerable; but during its paſſage over an extenſive ocean, it is gradually cooled; ſo that on its arrival at the fartheſt ſhore, it is again fit for reſpiration.

THOSE principles will account for the ſultry heats of large continents in the torrid zone; for the mild climate of iſlands in the ſame latitude; and for the ſuperior warmth in ſummer which large continents, ſituated in temperate or colder zones of the earth, enjoy, when compared with that of iſlands. The heat of a climate depends not only upon the immediate effect of the ſun's rays, but on their continued operation, on the effect which they have formerly produced, and which remains for ſome time in the ground. This is the reaſon why the day is warmeſt about two in the afternoon, the ſummer warmeſt about the middle of July, and the winter coldeſt about the middle of January.

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THE foreſts which cover America, and hinder the ſunbeams from heating the ground, are a great cauſe of the temperate climate of the equatorial parts. The ground, not being heated, cannot heat the air; and the leaves, which receive the rays intercepted from the ground, have not a maſs of matter ſufficient to abſorb heat enough for this purpoſe. Beſides, it is a known fact, that the vegetative power of a plant occaſions a perſpiration from the leaves in proportion to the heat to which they are expoſed; and, from the nature of evaporation, this perſpiration produces a cold in the leaf proportional to the perſpiration. Thus the effect of the leaf in heating the air in contact with it, is prodigiouſly diminiſhed. For thoſe obſervations, which throw much additional light on this curious ſubject, I am indebted to my ingenious friend, Mr. Robiſon, profeſſor of natural philoſophy in the univerſity of Edinburgh.

NOTE V. p. 9.

THE climate of Braſil has been deſcribed by two eminent naturaliſts, Piſo and Margrave, who obſerved it with a philoſophical accuracy, which we deſiderate in the accounts of many other provinces in America. Both repreſent it as temperate and mild, when compared with the climate of Africa. They aſcribe this chiefly to the refreſhing wind which blows continually from the ſea. The air is not only cool, but chilly through the night, in ſo much that the natives kindle fires every evening in their huts. Piſo de Medicina Braſilienſi, lib. i. p. 1, &c. Margravius Hiſtor. Rerum Natural. Braſiliæ, lib. viii. c. 3. p. 264. Nieuhoff, who reſided long in Braſil, confirms their deſcription. Churchill's Collection, vol. ii. p. 26. Gumilla, who reſided many years in the country, upon the river Orinoco, gives a ſimilar deſcription of the temperature of the climate there. Hiſt. de l'Orenoque, tom. i. p. 26. P. Acugna felt a very conſiderable degree of cold in the countries on the banks of the river Amazons. Relat. vol. ii. p. 56. M. Biet, who lived a conſiderable time in Cayenne, gives a ſimilar account of the temperature

temperature of that climate, and aſcribes it to the ſame cauſe. Voyage de la France, Exquinox, p. 330. Nothing can be more different from theſe deſcriptions than that of the burning heat of the African coaſt given by M. Adanſon. Voyage to Senegal, paſſim.

THE moſt obvious and probable cauſe of this ſuperior degree of cold, towards the ſouthern extremity of America, ſeems to be the form of the continent there. Its breadth gradually decreaſes as it ſtretches from St. Antonio ſouthwards, and from the bay of St. Julian to the Straits of Magellan its dimenſions are much contracted. On the eaſt and weſt ſides, it is waſhed by the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. From its ſouthern point it is probable that an open ſea ſtretches to the Antartic pole. In whichever of theſe directions the wind blows, it is cooled before it approaches the Magellanic regions, by paſſing over a vaſt body of water, nor is the land there of ſuch extent that it can recover any conſiderable degree of heat in its progreſs over it. Theſe circumſtances concur in rendering the temperature of the air in this diſtrict of America, more ſimilar to that of an inſular, than to that of a continental climate, and hinder it from acquiring the ſame degree of ſummer heat, with places in Europe and Aſia, in a correſponding northern latitude. The north wind is the only one that reaches this part of America, after blowing over a great continent. But from an attentive ſurvey of its poſition, this will be found to have a tendency, rather to diminiſh than augment the degree of heat. The ſouthern extremity of America is properly the termination of the immenſe ridge of the Andes, which ſtretches nearly in a direct line from north to ſouth, through the whole extent of the continent. The moſt ſultry regions in South America, Guiana, Braſil, Paraguay, and Tucuman, lie many degrees to the eaſt of the Magellanic regions. The level country of Peru, which enjoys the tropical heats, is ſituated conſiderably to the weſt of them. The north wind then, though it blows over land, does not bring to the ſouthern extremity of America, an increaſe of heat collected in its paſſage over torrid regions, but before it arrives there, it muſt have ſwept along the ſummits of the Andes, and come impregnated with the cold of that frozen region.

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NOTE VI. p. 10.

TWO French frigates were ſent upon a voyage of diſcovery in the year 1739. In latitude 44° ſouth, they began to feel a conſiderable degree of cold. In latitude 48°, they met with iſlands of floating ice. Hiſtoire des Navigations aux Terres Auſtrales, tom. ii. 256, &c. Dr. Halley fell in with ice in latitude 59°. Id. tom. i. p. 47. Commodore Byron, when on the coaſt of Patagonia, latitude 50° 53′ ſouth, on the fifteenth of December, which is midſummer in that part of the globe, the twenty-firſt of December being the longeſt day there, compares the climate to that of England in the middle of winter. Voyages by Hawkeſworth, i. 25. Mr. Banks having landed on Terra del Fuego in the Bay of Good Succeſs, latitude 55°, on the ſixteenth of January, which correſponds to the month of July in our hemiſphere, two of his attendants died in one night of extreme cold, and all the party were in the moſt imminent danger of periſhing. Id. ii. 51, 52. By the fourteenth of March, correſponding to September in our hemiſphere, winter was ſet in with rigour, and the mountains were covered with ſnow. Ibid. 72.

NOTE VII. p. 12.

M. CONDAMINE is one of the lateſt and moſt accurate obſervers of the interior ſtate of South America. "After deſcending from the Andes (ſays he) one beholds a vaſt and uniform proſpect of water and verdure, and nothing more. One treads upon the earth, but does not ſee it; as it is ſo entirely covered with luxuriant plants, weeds, and ſhrubs, that it would require a conſiderable degree of labour to clear it, for the ſpace of a foot. Relation abregé d'un Voyage, &c. p. 48. One of the ſingularities in the foreſts is a ſort of oſiers, or withs, called *bejucos* by the Spaniards, and *lianes* by the French, and *nibbees*

nibbees by the Indians, which are uſually employed as ropes in America. This plant twiſts about the trees which it meets with, and riſing above their higheſt branches, its tendrils deſcend perpendicularly, ſtrike into the ground, take root, riſe up around another tree, and thus mount and deſcend alternately. Other tendrils are carried obliquely by the wind, or ſome accident, and form a confuſion of interwoven cordage, which reſembles the rigging of a ſhip. Bancroft, Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, 99. Theſe withs are often as thick as the arm of a man. Ib. p. 75. M. Bouguer's account of the foreſts in Peru perfectly reſembles this deſcription. Voyage au Peru, p. 16. Oviedo gives a ſimilar deſcription of the foreſts in other parts of America. Hiſt. lib. ix. p. 144. D. The country of the Moxos is ſo much overflowed, that they are obliged to reſide on the ſummit of ſome riſing ground during ſome part of the year, and have no communication with their countrymen at any diſtance. Lettres Edifiantes, tom. x. p. 187. Garcia gives a full and juſt deſcription of the rivers, lakes, woods, and marſhes in thoſe countries of America which lie between the tropics. Origen de los Indios, lib. ii. c. 5. § 4, 5. The incredible hardſhips to which Gonzalez Pizarro was expoſed in attempting to march into the country to the eaſt of the Andes, gives a very ſtriking idea of that part of America in its original uncultivated ſtate. Garcil. de la Vega, Royal. Comment. of Peru, part ii. book iii. c. 2—5.

NOTE VIII. p. 14.

THE animals of America ſeem not always to have been of a ſize inferior to thoſe in other quarters of the globe. Near the banks of the Ohio, a conſiderable number of bones of an immenſe magnitude have been found. The place where this diſcovery has been made lies about one hundred and ninety miles below the junction of the river Scioto with the Ohio. It is about four miles diſtant from the banks of the latter, on the ſide of the marſh called the Great Salt Lick. The bones lie in vaſt quantities about five or ſix feet under ground, and the ſtratum

is

is viſible in the bank on the edge of the Lick. *Journal of Colonel George Croglan, MS. penes me.* This ſpot ſeems to be accurately laid down by Evans in his map. Theſe bones muſt have belonged to animals of enormous bulk, and naturaliſts being acquainted with no living creature of ſuch ſize, were at firſt inclined to think that they were mineral ſubſtances. Upon receiving a greater number of ſpecimens from various parts of the earth, and after inſpecting them more narrowly, they are now allowed to be the bones of an animal. As the elephant is the largeſt known quadruped, and the tuſks which were found nearly reſembled, both in form and quality, the tuſks of an elephant, it was concluded that the carcaſes depoſited on the Ohio were of that ſpecies. But Dr. Hunter, one of the perſons of our age beſt qualified to decide with reſpect to this point, having accurately examined ſeveral parcels of tuſks, and grinders, and jawbones, ſent from the Ohio to London, gives it as his opinion, that they did not belong to an elephant, but to ſome huge carnivorous animal of an unknown ſpecies. Phil. Tranſact. vol. lviii. p. 34. Bones of the ſame kind, and as remarkable for their ſize, have been found near the mouths of the great rivers Oby, Jeniſeia, and Lena, in Siberia. *Stralhrenberg, Deſcript. of north and eaſt Parts of Europe and Aſia*, p. 402, &c. The elephant ſeems to be confined in his range to the torrid zone, and never multiplies beyond it. In ſuch cold regions as thoſe bordering on the frozen ſea, he could not live. The exiſtence of ſuch large animals in America might open a wide field for conjecture. The more we contemplate the face of nature, and conſider the variety of her productions, the more we muſt be ſatisfied that aſtoniſhing changes have been made in the terraqueous globe by convulſions and revolutions, of which no account is preſerved in hiſtory.

NOTE

NOTE IX. p. 15.

THIS degeneracy of the domeſtic European animals in America ought to be imputed partly to each of theſe cauſes. In the Spaniſh ſettlements, which are ſituated either within the torrid zone, or in countries bordering upon it, the increaſe of heat, and diverſity of food, prevent ſheep and horned cattle from attaining the ſame ſize as in Europe. They ſeldom become ſo fat, and their fleſh is not ſo juicy, or of ſuch delicate flavour. In North-America, where the climate is more favourable, and ſimilar to that of Europe, the quality of the graſſes which ſpring up naturally in their paſture-grounds is not good. Mitchell, p. 151. Agriculture is ſtill ſo much in its infancy, that artificial food for cattle is not raiſed in any quantity. During a winter, long in many provinces, and rigorous in all, no proper care is taken of their cattle. The general treatment of their horſes and horned cattle is injudicious and harſh in all the Engliſh colonies. Theſe circumſtances contribute more, perhaps, than any thing peculiar in the quality of the climate to the degeneracy of breed in the horſes, cows, and ſheep, in moſt of its provinces.

NOTE X. p. 15.

IN the year 1518, the iſland of Hiſpaniola was afflicted with a dreadful viſitation of thoſe deſtructive inſects, the particulars of which Herrera deſcribes, and mentions a ſingular inſtance of the ſuperſtition of the Spaniſh planters. After trying various methods of exterminating the ants, they reſolved to implore protection of the ſaints, but as the calamity was new, they were at a loſs to find out the ſaint who could give them the moſt effectual aid. They caſt lots in order to diſcover the patron whom they ſhould invoke. The lots decided in favour of St. Saturninus. They celebrated his feſtival with

with great ſolemnity, and immediately, adds the hiſtorian, the calamity began to abate. Herrera, dec. 2. lib. iii. c. 15. p. 107.

NOTE XI. p. 17.

THE author of Recherches Philoſophiques ſur les Americains ſuppoſes this difference in heat to be equal to twelve degrees, and that a place thirty degrees from the equator in the old continent, is as warm as one ſituated eighteen degrees from it in America. tom. i. p. 11. Dr. Mitchell, after obſervations carried on during thirty years, contends that the difference is equal to fourteen or fifteen degrees of latitude. Preſent State, &c. p. 257.

NOTE XII. p. 17.

JANUARY 3d, 1765, Mr. Bertram, near the head of St. John's river in Eaſt Florida, obſerved a froſt ſo intenſe, that in one night, the ground was frozen an inch thick upon the banks of the river. The limes, citrons, and banana trees, at St. Auguſtine were deſtroyed. Bertram's Journal, p. 20. Other inſtances of the extraordinary operations of cold in the ſouthern provinces of North-America are collected by Dr. Mitchell. Preſent State, p. 206, &c. February 7th, 1747, the froſt at Charleſtown was ſo intenſe, that a perſon having carried two quart bottles of hot water to bed, in the morning they were ſplit to pieces, and the water ſolid lumps of ice. In a kitchen, where there was a fire, the water in a jar, in which there was a large live eel, was frozen to the bottom. Almoſt all the orange and olive trees were deſtroyed. Deſcription of South-Carolina, 8vo. Lond. 1761.

NOTE

NOTE XIII. p. 18.

A Remarkable inſtance of this occurs in Dutch Guiana, a country every where level, and ſo low, that during the rainy ſeaſons, it is uſually covered with water near two feet in height. This renders the ſoil ſo rich, that on the ſurface, for twelve inches in depth, it is a ſtratum of perfect manure, and as ſuch has been tranſported to Barbadoes. On the banks of the Eſſequebo, thirty crops of rattoon canes have been raiſed ſucceſſively, whereas in Weſt-Indian iſlands more than two is never expected. The expedients by which the planters endeavour to diminiſh this exceſſive fertility of ſoil are various. Bancroft, Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, p. 10, &c.

NOTE XIV. p. 28.

MULLER ſeems to have believed, without ſufficient evidence, that the Cape had been doubled, tom. i. p. 11, &c.; and the Imperial Academy of St. Peterſburgh gives ſome countenance to it, by the manner in which *Tſchukotſkoi-noſs* is laid down in their charts. But I am aſſured, from undoubted authority, that no Ruſſian veſſel has ever ſailed round that cape, and as the country of *Tſchutki* is not ſubject to the Ruſſian empire, it is very imperfectly known.

NOTE XV. p. 30.

WERE this the place for entering into a long and intricate geographical diſquiſition, many curious obſervations might ariſe from comparing the accounts of the two Ruſſian voyages, and the charts of their reſpective navigations. One remark is applicable to both. We cannot rely with abſolute certainty on the poſition which they aſſign to ſeveral of the places which they viſited. The weather

weather was ſo extremely foggy, that they ſeldom ſaw the ſun or ſtars, and the poſition of the iſlands and ſuppoſed continents was commonly determined by reckoning, not by obſervation. Beering and Tſchirikow proceeded much farther towards the eaſt than Krenitzin. The land diſcovered by Beering, which he imagined to be part of the American continent, is in the 236th degree of longitude from the firſt meridian in the iſle of Ferro, and in 58° 28″ of latitude. Tſchirikow came upon the ſame coaſt in longit. 241°, lat. 56°. Muller, i. 248, 249. The former muſt have advanced 60 degrees from the port of Petropawlowſka, from which he took his departure, and the latter 65 degrees. But from the chart of Krenitzin's voyage, it appears that he did not ſail farther towards the eaſt than the 280th degree, and only 32 degrees from Petropawlowſka. In 1741, Beering and Tſchirikow, both in going and returning, held a courſe which was moſtly to the ſouth of that chain of iſlands which they diſcovered, and obſerving the mountainous and rugged aſpect of the head-lands which they deſcried towards the north, they ſuppoſed them to be promontories belonging to ſome part of the American continent, which, as they fancied, ſtretched as far ſouth as the latitude 56. In this manner they are laid down in the chart publiſhed by Muller, and likewiſe in a manuſcript chart drawn by a mate of Beering's ſhip, communicated to me by Mr. Profeſſor Robiſon. But in 1769, Krenitzin, after wintering in the iſland Alaxa, ſtood ſo far towards the north in his return, that his courſe lay through the middle of what they had ſuppoſed to be a continent, which he found to be an open ſea, and that they had miſtaken rocky iſles for the head-lands of a continent. It is probable, that the countries diſcovered in 1741, towards the eaſt, do not belong to the American continent, but are only a continuation of the chain of iſlands. From the extreme ſummer cold of all thoſe iſles, one is led to conjecture that no large continent lies very near to them. The number of volcanos in this region of the globe is remarkable. There are ſeveral in Kamſchatka, and not one of the iſlands, great or ſmall, as far as the Ruſſian navigation extends, is without them. Many are actually burning,

burning, and the mountains in all bear marks of having been once in a ſtate of eruption. Were I diſpoſed to admit ſuch conjectures as have found place in other inquiries concerning the peopling of America, I might ſuppoſe that this part of the earth, having ſuffered violent convulſions from earthquakes and volcanos, an iſthmus, which may have formerly united Aſia to America, has been broken, and formed into a cluſter of iſlands by the ſhock.

It is ſingular, that at the very time the Ruſſian navigators were attempting to make diſcoveries in the north-weſt of America, the Spaniards were proſecuting the ſame deſign from another quarter. In 1769, two ſmall veſſels ſailed from Loretto in California to explore the coaſts of the country to the north of that peninſula. They advanced no farther than the port of Monte-Rey in latitude 36. But, in ſeveral ſucceſſive expeditions fitted out from the port of St. Blas in New Galicia, the Spaniards have advanced as far as the latitude 58. *Gazeta de Madrid*, March 19, and May 14, 1776. But as the journals of thoſe voyages have not yet been publiſhed, I cannot compare their progreſs with that of the Ruſſians, or ſhew how near the navigators of the two nations have approached to each other. It is to be hoped, that the enlightened miniſter, who has now the direction of American affairs in Spain, will not withhold this information from the public.

NOTE XVI. p. 44.

Few travellers have had ſuch opportunity of obſerving the natives of America, in its various diſtricts, as Don Antonio Ulloa. In a work lately publiſhed by him, he thus deſcribes the characteriſtical features of the race: "a very ſmall forehead, covered with hair towards its extremities, as far as the middle of the eye-brows; little eyes; a thin noſe, ſmall and bending towards the upper lip; the countenance broad; the ears large; the hair very black, lank, and coarſe; the limbs well turned, the feet

feet ſmall, the body of juſt proportion; and altogether ſmooth and free from hair, until old age, when they acquire ſome beard, but never on the cheeks." Noticias Americanas, &c. p. 307. M. le Chevalier Pinto, who reſided ſeveral years in a part of America which Ulloa never viſited, gives a ſketch of the general aſpect of the Indians there. "They are all of a copper colour, with ſome diverſity of ſhade, not in proportion to their diſtance from the equator, but according to the degree of elevation of the territory which they inhabit. Thoſe who live in a high country are fairer than thoſe in the marſhy low lands on the coaſt. Their face is round, farther removed, perhaps, than that of any people from an oval ſhape. Their forehead is ſmall, the extremity of their ears far from the face, their lips thick, their noſe flat, their eyes black, or of a cheſnut colour, ſmall, but capable of diſcerning objects at a great diſtance. Their hair is always thick and ſleek, and without any tendency to curl. They have no hair on any part of their body but the head. At the firſt aſpect, a ſouthern American appears to be mild and innocent, but on a more attentive view, one diſcovers in his countenance ſomething wild, diſtruſtful, and ſullen." M S. *penes me*. The two portraits, drawn by hands very different from thoſe of common travellers, have a near reſemblance.

NOTE XVII. p. 44.

AMAZING accounts are given of the perſevering ſpeed of the Americans. Adair relates the adventures of a Chikkaſah warrior, who run through woods and over mountains, three hundred computed miles in a day and a half and two nights. Hiſt. of Amer. Ind. 396.

NOTE XVIII. p. 48.

M. GODIN LE JEUNE, who reſided fifteen years among the Indians of Peru and Quito, and twenty years in

in the French colony of Cayenne, in which there is a conſtant intercourſe with the Galibis and other tribes on the Orinoco, obſerves, that the vigour of conſtitution among the Americans is exactly in proportion to their habits of labour. The Indians, in warm climates, ſuch as thoſe on the coaſts of the South Sea, on the river of Amazons, and the river Orinoco, are not to be compared for ſtrength with thoſe in cold countries; and yet, ſays he, boats daily ſet out from Para, a Portugueſe ſettlement on the river Amazons, to aſcend that river againſt the rapidity of the ſtream, and with the ſame crew they proceed to San Pablo, which is eight hundred leagues diſtant. No crew of white people, or even of negroes, would be found equal to a taſk of ſuch perſevering fatigue, as the Portugueſe have experienced, and yet the Indians, being accuſtomed to this labour from their infancy, perform it. MS. *penes me.*

NOTE XIX. p. 54.

DON ANTONIO ULLOA, who viſited a great part of Peru and Chili, the kingdom of New Granada, and ſeveral of the provinces bordering on the Mexican Gulf, while employed in the ſame ſervice with the French mathematicians during the ſpace of ten years, and who afterwards had an opportunity of viewing the North Americans, aſſerts, "that if we have ſeen one American, we may be ſaid to have ſeen them all, their colour and make are ſo nearly the ſame." Notic. Americanas, p. 308. A more early obſerver, Pedro de Cieça de Leon, one of the conquerors of Peru, who had likewiſe traverſed many provinces of America, affirms, that the people, men and women, although there is ſuch a multitude of tribes or nations as to be almoſt innumerable, and ſuch diverſity of climates, appear nevertheleſs like the children of one father and mother. Chronica del' Peru, parte i. c. 19. There is, no doubt, a certain combination of features, and peculiarity of aſpect, which forms what may be called a European or Aſiatic countenance. There muſt likewiſe be one that may be denominated American, common to

to the whole race. This may be ſuppoſed to ſtrike the traveller at firſt ſight, while the various ſhades, which diſtinguiſh people of different regions, eſcape his obſervation. But when perſons who had reſided ſo long among the Americans concur in bearing teſtimony to the ſimilarity of their appearance in every climate, we may conclude that it is more remarkable than that of any other race. See likewiſe Garcia Origen de los Indias, p. 54. 242. Torquemada Monarch. Indiana, ii. 571.

NOTE XX. p. 55.

M. LE CHEVALIER DE PINTO obſerves, that in the interior parts of Braſil, he had been informed that ſome perſons reſembling the white people of Darien have been found; but that the breed did not continue, and their children became like other Americans. This race, however, is very imperfectly known. MS. *penes me.*

NOTE XXI. p. 58.

THE teſtimonies of different travellers, concerning the Patagonians, have been collected and ſtated with a conſiderable degree of accuracy by the author of Recherches Philoſophiques, &c. tom. i. 281, &c. iii. 181, &c. Since the publication of his work, ſeveral navigators have viſited the Magellanic regions, and, like their predeceſſors, differ very widely in their accounts of its inhabitants. By Commodore Byron and his crew, who ſailed through the Straits in 1764, the common ſize of the Patagonians was eſtimated to be eight feet, and many of them much taller. Phil. Tranſact. vol. lvii. p. 78. By Captains Wallis and Carteret, who actually meaſured them in 1766, they were found to be from ſix feet to ſix feet five and ſeven inches in height. Phil. Tranſ. vol. lx. p. 22. Theſe ſeem to have been the very people whoſe ſize had been ſo much over-rated in the year 1764; for ſeveral of them had beads and red baize of the ſame kind

with what had been put aboard Captain Wallis's ſhip, and he naturally concluded that they had got theſe from Mr. Byron. Hawkeſw. i. In 1767 they were again meaſured by M. Bougainville, whoſe account agrees nearly with that of Captain Wallis. Voy. 129. To theſe I ſhall add a teſtimony of great weight. In the year 1762, Don Bernardo Ibagnez de Echavarri accompanied the Marquis de Valdelirios to Buenos Ayres, and reſided there ſeveral years. He is a very intelligent author, and his reputation for veracity unimpeached among his countrymen. In ſpeaking of the country towards the ſouthern extremity of America, "By what Indians," ſays he, "is it poſſeſſed? Not certainly by the fabulous Patagonians, who are ſuppoſed to occupy this diſtrict. I have from many eye-witneſſes, who have lived among thoſe Indians, and traded much with them, a true and accurate deſcription of their perſons. They are of the ſame ſtature with Spaniards. I never ſaw one who roſe in height two *varas* and two or three inches," *i. e.* about 80 or 81.332 inches Engliſh, if Echavarri makes his computation according to the *vara* of Madrid. This agrees nearly with the meaſurement of Captain Wallis. Reyno Jeſuitico, 238. Mr. Falkner, who reſided as a miſſionary forty years in the ſouthern parts of America, ſays, that "the Patagonians, or Puelches, are a large-bodied people; but I never heard of that gigantic race which others have mentioned, though I have ſeen perſons of all the different tribes of ſouthern Indians." Introd. p. 26.

NOTE XXII. p. 62.

Antonio Sanchez Ribeiro, a learned and ingenious phyſician, publiſhed a diſſertation in the year 1765, in which he endeavours to prove, that this diſeaſe was not introduced from America, but took its riſe in Europe, and was brought on by an epidemical and malignant diſorder. Did I chuſe to enter into a diſquiſition on this ſubject, which I ſhould not have mentioned, if it had not been intimately connected with this part of my inquiries,

quiries, it would not be difficult to point out ſome miſtakes with reſpect to the facts upon which he founds, as well as ſome errors in the conſequences which he draws from them. The rapid communication of this diſeaſe from Spain over Europe, ſeems to reſemble the progreſs of an epidemic, rather than that of a diſeaſe tranſmitted by infection. The firſt mention of it is in the year 1493, and before the year 1497 it had made its appearance in moſt countries of Europe, with ſuch alarming ſymptoms as rendered it neceſſary for the civil magiſtrate to interpoſe, in order to check its career.

NOTE XXIII. p. 65.

THE people of Otaheite have no denomination for any number above two hundred, which is ſufficient for their tranſactions. Voyages, by Hawkeſworth, ii. 228.

NOTE XXIV. p. 71.

AS the view which I have given of rude nations is extremely different from that exhibited by very reſpectable authors, it may be proper to produce ſome of the many authorities on which I found my deſcription. The manners of the ſavage tribes in America have never been viewed by perſons more capable of obſerving them with diſcernment, than the philoſophers employed by France and Spain, in the year 1735, to determine the figure of the earth. M. Bouguer d'Antonio Ulloa, and D. George Juan, reſided long among the natives of the leaſt civilized provinces in Peru. M. de la Condamine had not only this opportunity for obſervation, but, in his voyage down the Maragnon, he had acceſs to inſpect the ſtate of the various nations ſeated on its banks, in its vaſt courſe acroſs the continent of South America. There is a wonderful reſemblance in their repreſentation of the character of the Americans. "They are all extremely indolent," ſays M. Bouguer, "they are ſtupid, they paſs whole days

ſitting in the ſame place, without moving, or ſpeaking a ſingle word. It is not eaſy to deſcribe the degree of their indifference for wealth, and all its advantages. One does not well know what motive to propoſe to them, when one would perſuade them to perform any ſervice. It is vain to offer them money; they anſwer, that they are not hungry." Voyage au Perou, p. 102. If one conſiders them as men, the narrowneſs of their underſtanding ſeems to be incompatible with the excellence of the ſoul. Their imbecillity is ſo viſible, that one can hardly form an idea of them different from what one has of the brutes. Nothing diſturbs the tranquillity of their ſouls, equally inſenſible to diſaſters and to proſperity. Though half-naked, they are as contented as a monarch in his moſt ſplendid array. Riches do not attract them in the ſmalleſt degree, and the authority or dignities to which they may aſpire, are ſo little the objects of their ambition, that an Indian will receive with the ſame indifference the office of a judge (Alcalde) or that of a hangman, if deprived of the former and appointed to the latter. Nothing can move or change them. Intereſt has no power over them, and they often refuſe to perform a ſmall ſervice, though certain of a great recompence. Fear makes no impreſſion upon them, and reſpect as little. Their diſpoſition is ſo ſingular, that there is no method of influencing them, no means of rouzing them from that indifference, which is proof againſt all the endeavours of the wiſeſt perſons; no expedient that can induce them to abandon that groſs ignorance, or lay aſide that careleſs negligence, which diſconcert the prudence and diſappoint the care of ſuch as are attentive to their welfare. Voyage de Ulloa, tom. i. 335, 356. Of thoſe ſingular qualities he produces many extraordinary inſtances, p. 336—347. "Inſenſibility," ſays M. de la Condamine, "is the baſis of the American character. I leave others to determine, whether this ſhould be dignified with the name of apathy, or diſgraced with that of ſtupidity. It ariſes, without doubt, from the ſmall number of their ideas, which do not extend beyond their wants. Gluttons even to voracity, when they have wherewithal to ſatisfy their appetite. Temperate, when neceſſity obliges them, to ſuch a degree that they can

can endure want without ſeeming to deſire any thing. Puſillanimous and cowardly to exceſs, unleſs when they are rendered deſperate by drunkenneſs. Averſe to labour, indifferent to every motive of glory, honour, or gratitude; occupied entirely by the object that is preſent, and always determined by it alone, without any ſolicitude about futurity; incapable of foreſight or of reflection; abandoning themſelves, when under no reſtraint, to a puerile joy, which they expreſs by friſking about, and immoderate fits of laughter; without object or deſign, they paſs their life without thinking, and grow old without advancing beyond childhood, of which they retain all the defects. If this deſcription were applicable only to the Indians in ſome provinces of Peru, who are ſlaves in every reſpect but the name, one might believe, that this degree of degeneracy was occaſioned by the ſervile dependence to which they are reduced; the example of the modern Greeks being proof how far ſervitude may degrade the human ſpecies. But the Indians in the miſſions of the Jeſuits, and the ſavages who ſtill enjoy unimpaired liberty, being as limited in their faculties, not to ſay as ſtupid as the other, one cannot obſerve, without humiliation, that man, when abandoned to ſimple nature, and deprived of the advantages reſulting from education and ſociety, differs but little from the brute creation." Voyage de la Riv. de Amaz. 52, 53. M. de Chanvalon, an intelligent and philoſophical obſerver, who viſited Martinico in 1751, and reſided there ſix years, gives the following deſcription of the Caraibs. "It is not the red colour of their complexion, it is not the ſingularity of their features, which conſtitutes the chief difference between them and us. It is their exceſſive ſimplicity; it is the limited degree of their faculties. Their reaſon is not more enlightened or more provident than the inſtinct of brutes. The reaſon of the moſt groſs peaſants, that of the negroes brought up in the parts of Africa moſt remote from intercourſe with Europeans, is ſuch that we diſcover appearances of intelligence, which, though unfolded, is capable of increaſe. But of this the underſtanding of Caraibs ſeems to be hardly ſuſceptible. If ſound philoſophy and religion did not afford us their light, if we were

were to decide according to the firſt impreſſion which the view of that people makes upon the mind, we ſhould be diſpoſed to believe that they do not belong to the ſame ſpecies with us. Their ſtupid eyes are the true mirrour of their ſouls; it appears to be without functions. Their indolence is extreme; they have never the leaſt ſolicitude about the moment which is to ſucceed that which is preſent." Voyage a la Martinique, p. 44, 45, 51. M. de la Borde, Tertre, and Rochefort, confirm this deſcription. "The characteriſtics of the Californians," ſays P. Venegas, "as well as of all the other Indians, are ſtupidity and inſenſibility; want of knowledge and reflection; inconſtancy, impetuoſity, and blindneſs of appetite; an exceſſive ſloth, and abhorrence of all labour and fatigue; an exceſſive love of pleaſure and amuſement of every kind, however trifling or brutal; puſillanimity; and, in fine, a moſt wretched want of every thing which conſtitutes the real man, and renders him rational, inventive, tractable, and uſeful to himſelf and ſociety. It is not eaſy for Europeans, who never were out of their own country, to conceive an adequate idea of thoſe people: for, even in the leaſt frequented corners of the globe, there is not a nation ſo ſtupid, of ſuch contracted ideas, and ſo weak both in body and mind, as the unhappy Californians. Their underſtanding comprehends little more than what they ſee; abſtract ideas, and much leſs a chain of reaſoning, being far beyond their power; ſo that they ſcarce ever improve their firſt ideas, and theſe are in general falſe, or at leaſt inadequate. It is in vain to repreſent to them any future advantages which will reſult to them from doing or abſtaining from this or that particular immediately preſent; the relation of means and ends being beyond the ſtretch of their faculties. Nor have they the leaſt notion of purſuing ſuch intentions as will procure themſelves ſome future good, or guard them againſt future evils. Their will is proportional to their faculties, and all their paſſions move in a very narrow ſphere. Ambition they have none, and are more deſirous of being accounted ſtrong than valiant. The objects of ambition with us, honour, fame, reputation, titles, poſts, and diſtinctions of ſuperiority, are unknown among them;

ſo

ſo that this powerful ſpring of action, the cauſe of ſo much ſeeming good and real evil in the world, has no power here. This diſpoſition of mind, as it gives them up to an amazing languor and laſſitude, their lives fleeting away in a perpetual inactivity and deteſtation of labour, ſo it likewiſe induces them to be attracted by the firſt object which their own fancy, or the perſuaſion of another, place before them; and at the ſame time renders them as prone to alter their reſolutions with the ſame facility. They look with indifference upon any kindneſs done them; nor is even the bare remembrance of it to be expected from them. In a word, the unhappy mortals may be compared to children, in whom the developement of reaſon is not completed. They may indeed be called a nation who never arrived at manhood. Hiſt. of Californ. Engl. Tranſl. i. 64. 67. Mr. Ellis gives a ſimilar account of the want of foreſight and inconſiderate diſpoſition of the people adjacent to Hudſon's Bay. Voyage, p. 194, 195.

THE incapacity of the Americans is ſo remarkable, that negroes from all the different provinces of Africa are obſerved to be more capable of improving by inſtruction. They acquire the knowledge of ſeveral particulars which the Americans cannot comprehend. Hence the negroes, though ſlaves, value themſelves as a ſuperior order of beings, and look down upon the Americans with contempt, as void of capacity and of rational diſcernment. Ulloa Notic. Americ. 322, 323.

NOTE XXV. p. 76.

I HAVE obſerved, p. 51. that, for the ſame reaſon, they never attempt to rear children who are feeble, diſtorted, or defective in their make. So deeply were both thoſe ideas imprinted in the minds of the Americans, that the Peruvians, a civilized people, when compared with the barbarous tribes whoſe manners I am deſcribing, retained them; and even their intercourſe with

with the Spaniards has not been able to root them out. When twins are born in any family, it is ſtill conſidered as an ominous event, and the parents have recourſe to rigorous acts of mortification, in order to avert the calamities with which they are threatened. When a child is born with any deformity, they will not, if they can poſſibly avoid it, bring it to be baptized, and it is with difficulty they can be brought to rear it. Arriaga Extirpac. de la Idolat. del Peru, p. 32, 33.

NOTE XXVI. p. 79.

THE number of the fiſh in the rivers of South-America is ſo extraordinary, as to merit particular notice. "In the Maragnon," ſays P. Acugna, "fiſh are ſo plentiful, that, without any art, they may take them with their hands." p. 138. "In the Orinoco," ſays P. Gumilla, "beſides an infinite variety of other fiſh, tortoiſes or turtle abound in ſuch numbers, that I cannot find words to expreſs it. I doubt not but that ſuch as read my account will accuſe me of exaggeration: but I can affirm, that it is as difficult to count them, as to count the ſands on the banks of that river. One may judge of their number by the amazing conſumption of them; for all the nations contiguous to the river, and even many who are at a diſtance, flock thither at the ſeaſon of breeding, and not only find ſuſtenance during that time, but carry off vaſt quantities both of the turtles and of their eggs, &c." Hiſt. de l'Orenoque, ii. c. 22. p. 59. M. de la Condamine confirms their accounts, p. 159.

NOTE XXVII. p. 80.

PISO deſcribes two of theſe plants, the *Cururuape*, and the *Guajana-Timbe*. It is remarkable, that though they have this fatal effect upon fiſhes, they are ſo far from

from being noxious to the human ſpecies, they are uſed in medicine with ſucceſs. Piſo, lib. iv. c. 88. Bancroft mentions another, the *Hiarre*, a ſmall quantity of which is ſufficient to inebriate all the fiſh to a conſiderable diſtance, ſo that in a few minutes they float motionleſs on the ſurface of the water, and are taken with eaſe. Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, p. 106.

NOTE XXVIII. p. 82.

REMARKABLE inſtances occur of the calamities which rude nations ſuffer by famine. Alvar Nugnez Cabecca de Vaca, one of the moſt gallant and virtuous of the Spaniſh adventurers, reſided almoſt nine years among the ſavages of Florida. They were unacquainted with every ſpecies of agriculture. Their ſubſiſtence was poor and precarious. "They live chiefly," ſays he, "upon roots of different plants, which they procure with great difficulty, wandering from place to place in ſearch of them. Sometimes they kill ſome game, ſometimes they catch fiſh, but in ſuch ſmall quantities, that their hunger is ſo extreme as compels them to eat ſpiders, the eggs of ants, worms, lizards, ſerpents, a kind of unctuous earth, and I am perſuaded, that if in this country there were any ſtones, they would ſwallow theſe. They preſerve the bones of fiſhes and ſerpents, which they grind into powder, and eat. The only ſeaſon when they do not ſuffer much from famine, is when a certain fruit, which he calls *Tunas*, is ripe. They are ſometimes obliged to travel far from their uſual place of reſidence, in order to find them. Naufragias, c. xviii. p. 20, 21, 22. In another place, he obſerves that they are frequently reduced to paſs two or three days without food, c. xxiv. p. 27.

NOTE

NOTE XXIX. p. 84.

M. FIRMIN has given an accurate deſcription of the two ſpecies of manioc, with an account of its culture, to which he has added ſome experiments, in order to aſcertain the poiſonous qualities of the juice extracted from that ſpecies which he calls the bitter caſſava. Among the Spaniards it is known by the name of *Yuca brava*. Deſcr. de Surin. tom. i. p. 66.

NOTE XXX. p. 84.

THE plantain is found in Aſia and Africa, as well as in America. Oviedo contends, that it is not an indigenous plant of the New World, but was introduced into the iſland of Hiſpaniola, in the year 1516, by father Thomas de Berlanga, and that he tranſplanted it from the Canary iſlands, whither the original ſlips had been brought from the Eaſt Indies. Oviedo, lib. viii. c. 1. But the opinion of Acoſta and other naturaliſts, who reckon it an American plant, ſeems to be better founded. Acoſta Hiſt. Nat. lib. iv. 21. It was cultivated by rude tribes in America, who had little intercourſe with the Spaniards, and who were deſtitute of that ingenuity which diſpoſes men to borrow what is uſeful from foreign nations. Gumil. iii. 186. Wafer's Voyage, p. 87.

NOTE XXXI. p. 85.

IT is remarkable, that Acoſta, one of the moſt accurate and beſt informed writers concerning the Weſt Indies, affirms, that maize, though cultivated in the continent, was not known in the iſlands, the inhabitants of which had none but caſſada bread. Hiſt. Nat. lib. iv. c. 16. But P. Martyr, in the firſt book of his firſt Decad, which

which was written in the year 1493, upon the return of Columbus from his firſt voyage, expreſsly mentions maize as a plant which the iſlanders cultivated, and of which they made bread, p. 7. Gomara likewiſe aſſerts, that they were acquainted with the culture of maize. Hiſt. Gener. cap. 28. Oviedo deſcribes maize without any intimation of its being a plant that was not natural to Hiſpaniola. Lib. vii. c. 1.

NOTE XXXII. p. 91.

NEW HOLLAND, a country which formerly was only known, has lately been viſited by intelligent obſervers. It lies in a region of the globe where it muſt enjoy a very favourable climate, as it ſtretches from the 10th to the 38th degree of ſouthern latitude. It is of great extent, and from its ſquare form muſt be much more than equal to all Europe. The people who inhabit the various parts of it appear to be of one race. They are evidently ruder than moſt of the Americans, and have made ſtill leſs progreſs in improvement and the arts of life. There is not the leaſt appearance of cultivation in any part of this vaſt region. The inhabitants are extremely few, ſo that the country appears almoſt deſolate. Their tribes are ſtill more inconſiderable than thoſe of America. They depend for ſubſiſtence, almoſt entirely, on fiſhing. They do not ſettle in one place, but roam about in queſt of food. Both ſexes go ſtark-naked. Their habitations, utenſils, &c. are more ſimple and rude than thoſe of the Americans. Voyages, by Hawkeſworth, iii. 622, &c. This, perhaps, is the country where man has been diſcovered in the earlieſt ſtage of his progreſs, and it exhibits a miſerable ſpecimen of his condition and powers in that uncultivated ſtate. If this country ſhall be more fully explored by future navigators, the compariſon of the manners of its inhabitants with thoſe of the Americans will prove an inſtructive article in the hiſtory of the human ſpecies.

NOTE

NOTE XXXIII. p. 91.

P. Gabriel Marest, who travelled from his ſtation among the Illinois to Machillimakinac, thus deſcribes the face of the country: "We have marched twelve days without meeting a ſingle human creature. Sometimes we found ourſelves in vaſt meadows, of which we could not ſee the boundaries, through which there flowed many brooks and rivers, but without any path to conduct us. Sometimes we were obliged to open a paſſage acroſs thick foreſts, through buſhes, and underwood filled with briars and thorns. Sometimes we had to paſs through deep marſhes, in which we ſunk up to the middle. After being fatigued through the day, we had the earth for our bed, or a few leaves, expoſed to the wind, the rain, and all the injuries of the air. Lettr. Edifiantes, ii. 360. Dr. Brickell, in an excurſion from North Carolina towards the mountains, A. D. 1730, travelled fifteen days without meeting with a human creature. Nat. Hiſt. of North Carolina, 389. Diego de Ordas, in attempting to make a ſettlement in South America, A. D. 1532, marched fifty days through a country without one inhabitant. Herrera, dec. 5. lib. i. c. 11.

NOTE XXXIV. p. 92.

I Strongly ſuſpect that a community of goods, and an undivided ſtore, are known only among the rudeſt tribes of hunters; and that as ſoon as any ſpecies of agriculture or regular induſtry is known, the idea of an excluſive right of property to the fruits of them is introduced. I am confirmed in this opinion by accounts which I have received concerning the ſtate of property among the Indians in very different regions of America. "The idea of the natives of Braſil concerning property is, that if any perſon cultivate a field, he alone ought to enjoy the

the produce of it, and no other has a title to pretend to it. If an individual or a family go a-hunting or fiſhing, what is caught belongs to the individual or to the family, and they communicate no part of it to any but to their cazique, or to ſuch of their kindred as happen to be indiſpoſed. If any perſon in the village come to their hut, he may ſit down freely, and eat without aſking liberty. But this is the conſequence of their general principle of hoſpitality; for I never obſerved any partition of the increaſe of their fields, or the produce of the chace, which I could conſider as the reſult of any idea concerning a community of goods. On the contrary, they are ſo much attached to what they deem to be their property, that it would be extremely dangerous to encroach upon it. As far as I have ſeen, or can learn, there is not one tribe of Indians in South America, among whom that community of goods which has been ſo highly extolled is known. The circumſtance in the government of the Jeſuits, moſt irkſome to the Indians of Paraguay, was the community of goods which they introduced. This was repugnant to their original ideas. They were acquainted with the rights of private excluſive property, and they ſubmitted with impatience to regulations which deſtroyed them. M. le Cheval de Pinto, MS. *penes me.* Actual poſſeſſion (ſays a miſſionary who reſided ſeveral years among the Indians of the Five Nations) gives a right to the ſoil, but whenever a poſſeſſor ſees fit to quit it, another has as good right to take it as he who left it. This law, or cuſtom, reſpects not only the particular ſpot on which he erects his houſe, but alſo his planting ground. If a man has prepared a particular ſpot of ground, on which he deſigns in future to build or plant, no man has a right to incommode him, much leſs to the fruit of his labours, until it appears that he voluntarily gives up his views. But I never heard of any formal conveyance from one Indian to another in their natural ſtate. The limits of every canton is circumſcribed; that is, they are allowed to hunt as far as ſuch a river on this hand, and ſuch a mountain on the other. This area is occupied and improved by individuals and their families. Individuals, not the community, have the uſe and profit of their own labours,

or

or ſucceſs in hunting. MS. of Mr. Gideon Hawley, *penes me.*

NOTE XXXV. p. 93.

THIS difference of temper between the Americans and negroes is ſo remarkable, that it is a proverbial ſaying in the French iſlands, "Regarder un ſauvage de travers, c'eſt le battre; le battre, c'eſt le tuer; battre un negre, c'eſt le nourrir." Tertre ii. 490.

NOTE XXXVI. p. 94.

THE deſcription of the political ſtate of the people of Cinaloa, perfectly reſembles that of the inhabitants of North America. "They have neither laws nor kings (ſays a miſſionary who reſided long among them), to puniſh any crime. Nor is there, among them, any ſpecies of authority, or political government, to reſtrain them in any part of their conduct. It is true, that they acknowledge certain Caziques, who are heads of their families or villages, but their authority appears chiefly in war, and the expeditions againſt their enemies. This authority the Caziques obtain not by hereditary right, but by their valour in war, or by the power and number of their families and relations. Sometimes they owe their pre-eminence to their eloquence in diſplaying their own exploits." Ribas Hiſtor. de las Triumph. &c. p. 11. The ſtate of the Chiquitos in South America is nearly the ſame. "They have no regular form of government, or civil life, but in matters of public concern they liſten to the advice of their old men, and uſually follow it. The dignity of Cazique is not hereditary, but conferred according to merit, as the reward of valour in war. The union among them is imperfect. Their ſociety reſembles a republic without any head, in which every man is maſter of himſelf, and, upon the leaſt diſguſt, ſeparates from thoſe with whom he ſeemed to be connected." Relacion Hiſtorical

Hiſtorical de las Miſſiones de los Chiquitos, por P. Juan Patr. Fernandez, p. 32, 33. Thus, under very different climates, when nations are in a ſimilar ſtate of ſociety, their inſtitutions and civil government aſſume the ſame form.

NOTE XXXVII. p. 106.

"I Have known the Indians (ſays a perſon well acquainted with their mode of life) to go a thouſand miles for the purpoſe of revenge, in pathleſs woods, over hills and mountains, through huge cane ſwamps, expoſed to the extremities of heat and cold, the viciſſitude of ſeaſons, to hunger and thirſt. Such is their over-boiling revengeful temper, that they utterly contemn all thoſe things as imaginary trifles, if they are ſo happy as to get the ſcalp of the murderer, or enemy, to ſatisfy the craving ghoſts of their deceaſed relations." Adair's Hiſt. of Amer. Indians, p. 150.

NOTE XXXVIII. p. 107.

IN the account of the great war between the Algonquins and Iroquois, the atchievements of Piſkaret, a famous chief of the Algonquins, performed moſtly by himſelf alone, or with one or two companions, make a capital figure. De la Potherie, i. 297, &c. Colden's Hiſt. of Five Nations, 125, &c.

NOTE XXXIX. p. 109.

THE life of an unfortunate leader is often in danger, and he is always degraded from the rank which he had acquired by his former exploits. Adair, p. 388.

NOTE

NOTE XL. p. 109.

AS the ideas of the North Americans with reſpect to the mode of carrying on war, are generally known; I have founded my obſervations chiefly upon the teſtimony of the authors who deſcribe them. But the ſame maxims took place among other nations. A judicious miſſionary has given a view of the military operations of the people in Gran Chaco, in South America, perfectly ſimilar to thoſe of the Iroquois. "They are much addicted to war (ſays he), which they carry on frequently among themſelves, but perpetually againſt the Spaniards. But they may rather be called thieves than ſoldiers, for they never make head againſt the Spaniards, unleſs when they can aſſault them by ſtealth, or have guarded againſt any miſchance by ſpies, who may be called indefatigable; they will watch the ſettlements of the Spaniards for one, two, or three years, obſerving by night every thing that paſſes with the utmoſt ſolicitude, whether they may expect reſiſtance or not, and until they are prefectly ſecure of the event, they will not venture upon an attack; ſo that when they do give the aſſault, they are certain of ſucceſs, and free from all danger. Theſe ſpies, in order that they may not be obſerved, will creep on all-four like cats in the night; but if they are diſcovered, make their eſcape with much dexterity. But, although they never chuſe to face the Spaniards, if they be ſurrounded in any place, whence they cannot eſcape, they will fight with deſperate valour, and ſell their lives very dear." Lozano Deſcrip. del Gran Chaco, p. 78.

NOTE XLI. p. 110.

LERY, who was an eye-witneſs of the proceeding of the *Toupinambos*, a Braſilian tribe, in a war againſt a powerful nation of their enemies, deſcribes their courage and ferocity in very ſtriking terms. Ego cum Gallo altero,

tero, paulo curioſius, magno noſtro periculo (ſi enim ab hoſtibus capti aut leſi fuiſſemus, devorationi fuiſſemus devoti), barbaros noſtros in militiam euntes comitari volui. Hi, numero 4000 capita, cum hoſtibus ad littus decertarunt, tanta ferocitate, ut vel rabidos & furioſos quoſque ſuperarent. Cum primum hoſtes conſpexere, in magnos atque editos ululatus perruperunt. Hæc gens adeo fera eſt & truculenta, ut tantiſper dum virium vel tantillum reſtat, continuo dimicent, fugamque nunquam capeſſant. Quod a natura illis inditum eſſe reor. Teſtor interea me, qui non ſemel, tum peditum tum equitum copias ingentes, in aciem inſtructas hic conſpexi, tanta numquam voluptate videndis peditum legionibus armis fulgentibus, quanta tum pugnantibus iſtis perfuſſum fuiſſe. Lery Hiſt. Navigat. in Braſil. ap de Bry, iii. 207, 208, 209.

NOTE XLII. p. 111.

THE Americans, like other fierce nations, originally cut off the heads of the enemies whom they ſlew in war, and carried them away as trophies. But, as they found theſe cumberſome in their retreat, which they always make very rapidly, and often through a vaſt extent of country, they became ſatisfied with tearing off their ſcalps. This cuſtom, though moſt prevalent in North America, was not unknown among the ſouthern tribes. Lozano, p. 79.

NOTE XLIII. p. 115.

THE terms of the war-ſong ſeem to be dictated by the ſame fierce ſpirit of revenge. "I go to war to revenge the death of my brothers; I ſhall kill; I ſhall exterminate; I ſhall burn my enemies; I ſhall bring away ſlaves; I ſhall devour their heart, dry their fleſh, drink their blood; I ſhall tear off their ſcalps, and make cups

of their ſkulls." Boſſu's Travels through Louiſiana, vol. i. p. 102. I am informed, by perſons on whoſe teſtimony I can rely, that as the number of people in the Indian tribes has decreaſed ſo much, almoſt none of their priſoners are put to death. It is conſidered as better policy to ſpare and to adopt them. Thoſe dreadful ſcenes which I have deſcribed occur now ſo rarely, that miſſionaries and traders who have reſided long among the Indians, never were witneſſes to them.

NOTE XLIV. p. 116.

ALL the travellers who have viſited the moſt uncivilized of the American tribes, agree in this. It is confirmed by two remarkable circumſtances, which occurred in the conqueſt of different provinces. In the expedition of Narvaez into Florida in the year 1528, the Spaniards were reduced to ſuch extreme diſtreſs by famine, that in order to preſerve their own lives, they eat ſuch of their companions as happened to die. This appeared ſo ſhocking to the natives, who were accuſtomed to devour their priſoners, that it filled them with horror and indignation againſt the Spaniards. Torquemada Monarch. Ind. ii. p. 584. Naufragios de Alv. Nugnez Cabeca de Vaca, c. xiv. p. 15. During the ſiege of Mexico, though the Mexicans devoured with greedineſs the Spaniards and Tlaſcalans, whom they took priſoners, the utmoſt rigour of the famine which they ſuffered could not induce them to touch the dead bodies of their own countrymen. Bern. Diaz. del Caſtillo Conquiſt. de la N. Eſpagna, p. 156.

NOTE XLV. p. 117.

MANY ſingular circumſtances concerning the treatment of priſoners among the people of Braſil, are contained in the narrative of Stadius, a German officer, in the

the ſervice of the Portugueſe, publiſhed in the year 1556. He was taken priſoner by the *Toupinambos*, and remained in captivity nine years. He was often preſent at thoſe horrid feſtivals which he deſcribes, and was deſtined himſelf to the ſame cruel fate with other priſoners. But he ſaved his life by extraordinary efforts of courage and addreſs. De Bry, iii. p. 34, &c. M. De Lery, who accompanied M. De Villegagnon in his expedition to Braſil, in the year 1556, and who reſided a good time in that country, agrees with Stadius in every circumſtance of importance. He was frequently an eye-witneſs of the manner in which the Braſilians treated their priſoners. De Bry, iii. 210. Several ſtriking particulars omitted by them, are mentioned by a Portugueſe author. Purch. Pilgr. iv. 1294, &c.

NOTE XLVI. p. 120.

THOUGH I have followed that opinion concerning the apathy of the Americans, which appeared to me moſt rational, and ſupported by the authority of the moſt reſpectable authors, other theories have been formed with regard to it, by writers of great eminence. D. Ant. Ulloa, in a late work, contends, that the texture of the ſkin and bodily habit of the Americans is ſuch, that they are leſs ſenſible of pain than the reſt of mankind. He produces ſeveral proofs of this, from the manner in which they endure the moſt cruel chirurgical operations, &c. Noticias Americanas, p. 313, 314. The ſame obſervation has been made by ſurgeons in Braſil. An Indian, they ſay, never complains under pain, and will bear the amputation of a leg or arm without uttering a ſingle groan. MS. penes me.

NOTE XLVII. p. 121.

THIS is an idea natural to all rude nations. Among the Romans, in the early periods of their commonwealth,

it was a maxim that a priſoner, "tum deceſſiſſe videtur cum captus eſt." Digeſt. lib. xlix. tit. 15. c. 18. and afterwards when the progreſs of refinement rendered them more indulgent with reſpect to this article, they were obliged to employ two fictions of law to ſecure the property, and permit the return of a captive, the one by the Lex Cornelia, and the other by the Jus Poſtliminii. Heinec. Elem. Jur. Civ. ſec. ord. Pand. ii. p. 294. Among the negroes the ſame ideas prevail. No ranſom was ever accepted for a priſoner. As ſoon as one is taken in war, he is reputed to be dead; and he is ſo in effect to his country and his family. Voy. du Cheval. des Marchais, i. p. 369.

NOTE XLVIII. p. 122.

THE people of Chili, the moſt gallant and high-ſpirited of all the Americans, are the only exception to this obſervation. They attack their enemies in the open field; their troops are ranged in regular order; their battalions advance to the charge not only with courage, but with diſcipline. The North Americans, though many of them have ſubſtituted the European fire-arms in place of their own bows and arrows, ſtill adhere to their ancient maxims of war, and carry it on according to their own peculiar ſyſtem. But the Chileſe nearly reſemble the warlike nations of Europe and Aſia in their military operations. Ovalle's Relation of Chili. Church's Coll. iii. p. 71. Lozano's Hiſt. Parag. i. 144, 145.

NOTE XLIX. p. 125.

HERRERA gives a remarkable proof of this. In Yucutan, the men are ſo ſolicitous about their dreſs, that they carry about with them mirrors, probably made of ſtone, like thoſe of the Mexicans, Dec. iv. lib. iii. c. 8. in which they delight to view themſelves; but the women

men never uſe theſe. Dec. iv. lib. x. c. 3. He takes notice, that among the fierce tribe of the *Panches*, in the new kingdom of Granada, none but diſtinguiſhed warriors were permitted either to pierce their lips, and to wear green ſtones in them, or to adorn their heads with plumes of feathers. Dec. vii. lib. ix. c. 4. In ſome provinces of Peru, though that empire had made conſiderable progreſs in civilization, the ſtate of women was little improved. All the toil of cultivation and domeſtic work was devolved upon them, and they were not permitted to wear bracelets, or other ornaments, with which the men were fond of decking themſelves. Zarate Hiſt. de Peru, i. p. 15, 16.

NOTE L. p. 125.

I HAVE ventured to call this mode of anointing and painting their bodies, the *dreſs* of the Americans. This is agreeable to their own idiom. As they never ſtir abroad if they are not completely anointed; they excuſe themſelves when in this ſituation, by ſaying, that they cannot appear becauſe they are naked. Gumilla Hiſt. de l'Orenoque, i. 191.

NOTE LI. p. 126.

SOME tribes in the province of Cinaloa, on the gulf of California, ſeem to be among the rudeſt people of America united in the ſocial ſtate. They neither cultivate nor ſow; they have no houſes in which they reſide. Thoſe in the inland country ſubſiſt by hunting; thoſe on the ſea-coaſt chiefly by fiſhing. Both depend upon the ſpontaneous productions of the earth, fruits, plants, and roots of various kinds. In the rainy ſeaſon, as they have no habitations to afford them ſhelter, they gather bundles of reeds, or ſtrong graſs, and binding them together at one end, they open them at the other, and

fitting

fitting them to their heads, they are covered as with a large cap, which like a pent-houſe throws off the rain, and will keep them dry for ſeveral hours. During the warm ſeaſon, they form a ſhed with the branches of trees, which protects them from the ſultry rays of the ſun. When expoſed to cold they make large fires, round which they ſleep in the open air. Hiſtoria de los triumfos de nueſtra ſanta feé entre gentes las mas barbaras, &c. por P. And. Perez de Ribas, p. 7, &c.

NOTE LII. p. 127.

THESE houſes reſemble barns. We have meaſured ſome which were a hundred and fifty paces long, and twenty paces broad. Above a hundred perſons reſide in ſome of them. Wilſon's Account of Guiana. Purch. Pilgr. vol. iv. p. 1263. Ibid. 1291. The Indian houſes, ſays M. Barrere, have a moſt wretched appearance, and are a ſtriking image of the rudeneſs of early times. Their huts are commonly built on ſome riſing ground, or on the banks of a river, huddled ſometimes together, ſometimes ſtraggling, and always without any order. Their aſpect is melancholy and diſagreeable. One ſees nothing but what is hideous and ſavage. The uncultivated fields have no gaiety. The ſilence which reigns there, unleſs when interrupted by the diſagreeable notes of birds, or cries of wild beaſts, is extremely diſmal. Relat. de la France Equin. p. 146.

NOTE LIII. p. 129.

SOME tribes in South America can ſend their arrows to a great diſtance, and with conſiderable force, without the aid of the bow. They make uſe of a hollow reed, about nine feet long, and an inch think, which is called a *Sarbacane*. In it they lodge a ſmall arrow, with ſome unſpun cotton wound about its great end; this confines the

the air, ſo that they can blow it with aſtoniſhing rapidity, and a ſure aim, to the diſtance of above a hundred paces. Theſe ſmall arrows are always poiſoned. Fermin. Deſcr. de Surin. i. 55. Bancroft's Hiſt. of Guiana, p. 281, &c. The Sarbacane is much uſed by the Eaſt Indians.

NOTE LIV. p. 129.

I MIGHT produce many inſtances of this, but ſhall ſatisfy myſelf with one, taken from the Eſkimaux. "Their greateſt ingenuity (ſays Mr. Ellis) is ſhewn in the ſtructure of their bows, made commonly of three pieces of wood, each making part of the ſame arch, very nicely and exactly joined together. They are commonly of fir or larch; and as this wants ſtrength and elaſticity, they ſupply both by bracing the back of the bow, with a kind of thread, or line, made of the ſinews of their deer, and the bow-ſtring of the ſame materials. To make them draw more ſtiffly, they dip them into water, which cauſes both the back of the bow and the ſtring to contract, and conſequently gives it the greater force; and as they practiſe from their youth, they ſhoot with very great dexterity." Voyage to Hudſon's Bay, p. 138.

NOTE LV. p. 130.

NECESSITY is the great prompter and guide of mankind in their inventions. There is, however, ſuch inequality in ſome parts of their progreſs, and ſome nations get ſo far the ſtart of others in circumſtances nearly ſimilar, that we muſt aſcribe this to ſome events in their ſtory, or to ſome peculiarity in their ſituation with which we are unacquainted. The people in the iſland of Otaheite, lately diſcovered in the South Sea, far excel moſt of the Americans in the knowledge and practice of the arts of ingenuity, and yet they had not invented any method of boiling water, and having no veſſel that would bear

bear the fire, they had no more idea that water could be made hot, than that it could be made ſolid. Voyages by Hawkeſworth, i. 466, 484.

NOTE LVI. p. 130.

ONE of theſe boats, which could carry nine men, weighed only ſixty pounds. Goſnol Relat. des Voy. a la Virgin. Rec. de Voy. au Nord. tom. v. p. 403.

NOTE LVII. p. 132.

A REMARKABLE proof of this is produced by Ulloa. In weaving hammocks, coverlets, and the other coarſe cloaths, which they are accuſtomed to manufacture, their induſtry has diſcovered no more expeditious method, than to take up thread after thread, and after counting and ſorting them each time, to paſs the woof between them, ſo that in finiſhing a ſmall piece of theſe ſtuffs, they frequently ſpend more than two years. Voyage, i. 336. Bancroft gives the ſame deſcription of the Indians of Guiana, p. 255. According to Adair, the ingenuity and diſpatch of the North American Indians are not greater, p. 422. From one of the engravings of the Mexican paintings in Purchas, vol. iii. p. 1106. I think it probable that the people of Mexico were unacquainted with any better or more expeditious mode of weaving. A loom was an invention beyond the ingenuity of the moſt improved Americans. In all their works they advance ſo ſlowly, that one of their artiſts is two months at a tobacco-pipe with his knife, before he finiſhes it. Ibid. p. 423.

NOTE LVIII. p. 134.

THE article of religion in P. Lafitau's Moeurs des Sauvages, extends to 347 tedious pages in quarto.

NOTE

NOTE LIX. p. 136.

I HAVE referred the reader to ſeveral of the authors who deſcribe the moſt uncivilized nations in America. Their teſtimony is uniform. That of P. Ribas concerning the people of Cinaloa, coincides with the reſt. "I was extremely attentive (ſays he), during the years I reſided among them, to aſcertain whether they were to be conſidered as idolaters; and it may be affirmed with the moſt perfect exactneſs, that though among ſome of them there may be traces of idolatry, yet others have not the leaſt knowledge of God, or even of any falſe deity, nor pay any formal adoration to the Supreme Being, who exerciſes dominion over the world; nor have they any conception of the providence of a creator or governor, from whom they expect in the next life the reward of their good, or the puniſhment of their evil deeds. Neither do they publicly join in any act of divine worſhip. Ribas Triumphos, &c. p. 16.

NOTE LX. p. 136.

THE people of Braſil were ſo much affrightened by thunder, which is frequent and dreadful in their country, as well as in other parts of the torrid zone, that it was not only the object of religious reverence, but the moſt expreſſive name in their language for the Deity, was *Toupan*, the ſame by which they diſtinguiſhed thunder. Piſo de Medec. Braſil, p. 8. Nieuhoff. Church-Coll. ii. p. 132.

NOTE LXI. p. 143.

BY the account which M. Dumont, an eye-witneſs, gives of the funeral of the great chief of the Natchez, it

it appears, that the feelings of the perſons who ſuffered on that occaſion were very different. Some ſolicited the honour with eagerneſs; others laboured to avoid their doom, and ſeveral ſaved their lives by flying to the woods. As the Indian Bramins give an intoxicating draught to the women, who are to be burnt together with the bodies of their huſbands, which render them inſenſible of their approaching fate, the Natchez obliged their victims to ſwallow ſeveral large pills of tobacco, which produce a ſimilar effect. Mem. de Louſ. i. 227.

NOTE LXII. p. 149.

ON ſome occaſions, particularly in dances inſtituted for the recovery of perſons who are indiſpoſed, they are extremely licentious and indecent. De la Potherie Hiſt. &c. ii. p. 42. Charlev. N. F. iii. p. 319. But the nature of their dances is commonly ſuch as I have deſcribed.

NOTE LXIII. p. 151.

THE *Othomacoas*, a tribe ſeated on the banks of the Orinoco, employ for the ſame purpoſe a compoſition, which they call *Yupa*. It is formed of the ſeeds of an unknown plant, reduced to powder, and certain ſhells burnt and pulverized. The effects of this when drawn up into the noſtrils are ſo violent, that they reſemble madneſs rather than intoxication. Gumilla, i. 286.

NOTE LXIV. p. 153.

THOUGH this obſervation holds true among the greater part of the ſouthern tribes, there are ſome in which the intemperance of the women is as exceſſive as

as that of the men. Bancroft's Nat. Hiſt. of Guiana, p. 275.

NOTE LXV. p. 158.

EVEN in the moſt intelligent writers concerning the manners of the Americans, one meets with inconſiſtent and inexplicable circumſtances. P. Charlevoix, who, in conſequence of the controverſy between his order and that of the Franciſcans, with reſpect to the talents and abilities of the North Americans, is diſpoſed to repreſent both their intellectual and moral qualities in the moſt favourable light, aſſerts, that they are engaged in continual negociations with their neighbours, and conduct theſe with the moſt refined addreſs. At the ſame time, he adds, "that it becomes their envoys or plenipotentiaries to exert their abilities and eloquence, for if the terms which they offer are not accepted of, they had need to ſtand on their guard. It frequently happens, that a blow with a hatchet is the only return given to their propoſitions. He is not out of danger even if he is ſo fortunate as to avoid the ſtroke, he may expect to be purſued, and, if taken, to be burnt." Hiſt. N. Fr. iii. 251. Men capable of ſuch acts of violence, ſeem to be unacquainted with the firſt principles upon which the intercourſe between nations is founded; and inſtead of the perpetual negociations which Charlevoix mentions, it ſeems impoſſible that there ſhould be any correſpondence whatever among them.

NOTE LXVI. p. 159.

IT is a remark of Tacitus concerning the Germans, "Gaudent muneribus, ſed nec data imputant, nec acceptis obligantur." C. 21. An author who had a good opportunity of obſerving the principle which leads ſavages neither to expreſs gratitude for favours which they had

had received, nor to expect any return for ſuch as they beſtowed; thus explains their ideas: "If, ſay they, you give me this, it is becauſe you have no need of it yourſelf; and as for me, I never part with that which I think neceſſary to me." Memoir ſur les Galibis; Hiſt. des plantes de la Guiane Francoiſe par M. Aublet, tom. ii. p. 110.

NOTE LXVII. p. 171.

AND. BERNALDES, the contemporary and friend of Columbus, hath preſerved ſome circumſtances concerning the bravery of the Caribbees, which are not mentioned by Don Ferdinand Columbus, or the other hiſtorians of that period, whoſe works have been publiſhed. A Caribbean canoe, with four men, two women, and a boy, fell in unexpectedly with the fleet of Columbus in his ſecond voyage, as it was ſteering through their iſlands. At firſt, they were ſtruck almoſt ſtupid with aſtoniſhment at ſuch a ſtrange ſpectacle, and hardly moved from the ſpot for above an hour. A Spaniſh bark, with twenty-five men, advanced towards them, and the fleet gradually ſurrounded them, ſo as to cut off their communication with the ſhore. "When they ſaw that it was impoſſible to eſcape (ſays the hiſtorian), they ſeized their arms with undaunted reſolution, and began the attack. I uſe the expreſſion, *with undaunted reſolution*, for they were few, and beheld a vaſt number ready to aſſault them. They wounded ſeveral of the Spaniards, although they had targets, as well as other defenſive armour; and even after their canoe was overſet, it was with no little difficulty and danger, that part of them were taken, as they continued to defend themſelves, and to uſe their bows with great dexterity while ſwimming in the ſea. Hiſt. de D. Fern. y D. Yſab. MSS. c. 119.

NOTE

NOTE LXVIII. p. 171.

A PROBABLE conjecture may be formed with reſpect to the cauſe of the diſtinction in character between the Caribbees and the inhabitants of the larger iſlands. The former appear manifeſtly to be a ſeparate race. Their language is totally different from that of their neighbours in the large iſlands. They themſelves have a tradition, that their anceſtors came originally from ſome part of the continent, and having conquered and exterminated the ancient inhabitants, took poſſeſſion of their lands, and of their women. Rochefort 384. Tertre, 360. Hence they call themſelves *Banaree*, which ſignifies a man come from beyond ſea. Labat. vi. 131. Accordingly, the Caribbees ſtill uſe two diſtinct languages, one peculiar to the men, and the other to the women. Tertre, 361. The language of the men has nothing common with that ſpoken in the large iſlands. The dialect of the women conſiderably reſembles it. Labat. 129. This ſtrongly confirms the tradition which I have mentioned. The Caribbees themſelves imagine, that they were a colony from the *Galibis*, a powerful nation of Guiana, in South America. Tertre, 361. Rochefort, 348. But as their fierce manners approach nearer to thoſe of the people in the northern continent, than to thoſe of the natives of South America; and as their language has likewiſe ſome affinity to that ſpoken in Florida, their origin ſhould be deduced rather from the former than from the latter. Labat. 128, &c. Herrera, Dec. i. lib. ix. c. 4. In their wars, they ſtill obſerve their ancient practice of deſtroying all the males, and preſerving the women either for ſervitude or for breeding.

NOTE

NOTE LXIX. p. 171.

OUR knowledge of the events which happened in the conqueſt of New Spain, is derived from ſources of information more original and authentic than that of any tranſaction in the hiſtory of America. The letters of Cortes to the Emperor Charles V. are the moſt valuable of theſe, and the firſt in order of time. As Cortes early aſſumed a command independent of Velaſquez, it became neceſſary to convey ſuch an account of his operations to Madrid, as might procure him the approbation of his ſovereign.

THE firſt of his diſpatches has never been made public. It was ſent from Vera-Cruz, July 16, 1519. It muſt have come to the Emperor's hands while he was in Germany, as he left Spain on the 22d of May in that year, in order to receive the imperial crown. I have made diligent ſearch for a copy of this diſpatch, both in Spain and in Germany, but without ſucceſs. This, however, is of leſs conſequence, as it could not contain any thing very material, being written ſo ſoon after Cortes arrived in New Spain. The ſecond diſpatch, dated October 30th, 1520, was publiſhed at Seville, A. D. 1522, and the third and fourth ſoon after they were received. A Latin tranſlation of them appeared in Germany, A. D. 1532. Ramuſio ſoon after made them more generally known, by inſerting them in his valuable collection. They contain a regular and minute hiſtory of the expedition, with many curious particulars concerning the policy and manners of the Mexicans. The work does honour to Cortes; the ſtyle is ſimple and perſpicuous; but as it was manifeſtly his intereſt to repreſent his own actions in the faireſt light, his victories are probably exaggerated, his loſſes diminiſhed, and his acts of rigour and violence ſomewhat ſoftened.

THE next in order is the Cronica de la Nueva Eſpagna, by Franciſco Lopez de Gomara, publiſhed A. D. 1554. Gomara's

Gomara's hiſtorical merit is conſiderable. His mode of narration is clear, flowing, always agreeable, and ſometimes elegant. But he is frequently inaccurate and credulous; and as he was the domeſtic chaplain of Cortes after his return from New Spain, and probably compoſed his work at his deſire, it is manifeſt that he labours to magnify the merit of his hero, and to conceal or extenuate ſuch tranſactions as were unfavourable to his character. Of this Herrera accuſes him in one inſtance, Dec. ii. lib. iii. c. 2. and it is not once only that this is conſpicuous. He writes, however, with ſo much freedom concerning ſeveral meaſures of the Spaniſh court, that the copies both of his Hiſtoria de las Indias, and of his Cronica, were called in by a decree of the council of the Indies, and they were long conſidered as prohibited books in Spain, though of late licence to print them has been granted. Pinelo Biblioth. 589.

The Chronicle of Gomara induced Bernal Diaz del Caſtillo to compoſe his Hiſtoria Verdadera de la Conquiſta de la Nueva Eſpagna. He had been an adventurer in each of the expeditions to New Spain, and was the companion of Cortes in all his battles and perils. When he found that neither he himſelf, nor many of his fellow-ſoldiers were once mentioned by Gomara, but that the fame of all their exploits was aſcribed to Cortes; the gallant old veteran laid hold of his pen with indignation, and compoſed his true hiſtory. It contains a prolix, minute, confuſed narrative of all Cortes's operations, in ſuch a rude vulgar ſtyle as might be expected from an illiterate ſoldier. But as he relates tranſactions of which he was witneſs, and in which he performed a conſiderable part, his account bears all the marks of authenticity, and is accompanied with ſuch a pleaſant *naiveté*, with ſuch intereſting details, with ſuch amuſing vanity, and yet ſo pardonable in an old ſoldier who had been (as he boaſts) in a hundred and nineteen battles, as renders his book one of the moſt ſingular that is to be found in any language.

Pet.

PET. MARTYR ab Angleria, in a Treatiſe de Inſulis nuper inventis, added to his Decades de rebus Oceanicis & novo orbe, gives ſome account of Cortes's expedition. But he proceeds no farther than to relate what happened after his firſt landing. This work, which is brief and ſlight, ſeems to contain the information tranſmitted by Cortes in his firſt diſpatches, embelliſhed with ſeveral particulars communicated to the author by the officers who brought the letters from Cortes.

BUT the book to which the greater part of modern hiſtorians have had recourſe for information concerning the conqueſt of New Spain, is Hiſtoria de la Conquiſta de Mexico, per D. Antonio de Solis, firſt publiſhed A. D. 1684. I know no author in any language whoſe literary fame has riſen ſo far beyond his real merit. De Solis is reckoned by his countrymen one of the pureſt writers in the Caſtilian tongue; and if a foreigner may venture to give his opinion concerning a matter of which Spaniards alone are qualified to judge, he is intitled to that praiſe. But, though his language be correct, his taſte in compoſition is far from being juſt. His periods are ſo much laboured as to be often ſtiff, and ſometimes tumid; the figures, which he employs by way of ornament, are trite or improper, and his obſervations ſuperficial. Theſe blemiſhes, however, might eaſily be overlooked, if he were not defective with reſpect to all the great qualities of an hiſtorian. Deſtitute of that patient induſtry in reſearch, which conducts to the knowledge of truth; a ſtranger to that impartiality which weighs evidence with cool attention, and ever eager to eſtabliſh his favourite ſyſtem of exalting the character of Cortes into that of a perfect hero, exempt from error, and adorned with every virtue, he is leſs ſolicitous to diſcover what was true, than to relate what might appear ſplendid. When he attempts any critical diſcuſſion, his reaſonings are fallacious, and founded upon an imperfect view of facts. Though he ſometimes quotes the *diſpatches* of Cortes, he ſeems not to have conſulted them; and though he ſets out with ſome cenſure on Gomara, he frequently prefers his authority, the moſt doubtful of any, to that of the other contemporary hiſtorians.

BUT

But of all the Spaniſh writers, Herrera furniſhes the fulleſt and moſt accurate information concerning the conqueſt of Mexico, as well as every other tranſaction in America. The induſtry and attention with which he conſulted not only the books, but the original papers and public records, which tended to throw any light upon the ſubject of his enquiries, were ſo great, and he uſually judges of the evidence before him with ſo much impartiality and candour, that his decads may be ranked among the moſt judicious and uſeful hiſtorical collections. If, by attempting to relate the various occurrences in the New World in a ſtrict chronological order, the arrangement of the events in his work had not been rendered ſo perplexed, diſconnected, and obſcure, that it is an unpleaſant taſk to collect from different parts of his book, and piece together the detached ſhreds of a ſtory, he might juſtly have been ranked among the moſt eminent hiſtorians of his country. He gives an account of the materials from which he compoſed his work, Dec. vi. lib. iii. c. 19.

NOTE LXX. p. 175.

Cortes purpoſed to have gone in the train of Ovando when he ſet out for his government in the year 1502, but was detained by an accident. As he was attempting in a dark night to ſcramble up to the window of a lady's bed chamber, with whom he carried on an intrigue, an old wall, on the top of which he had mounted, gave way, and he was ſo much bruiſed by the fall as to be unfit for the voyage. Gomara, Cronica de la Nueva Eſpagna, cap. 1.

NOTE LXXI. p. 177.

CORTES had two thouſand peſos in the hands of Andrew Duero, and he borrowed four thouſand. Theſe ſums are about equal in value to fifteen hundred pounds Sterling; but as the price of every thing was extremely high in America, they made but a ſcanty ſtock when applied in this manner. Herrera, Dec. ii. lib. iii. c. 2. B. Diaz. c. 20.

NOTE LXXII. p. 181.

THE names of thoſe gallant officers which will often occur in the ſubſequent ſtory, were Juan Velaſquez de Leon, Alonſo Hernandez Portocarrero, Franciſco de Montejo, Chriſtoval de Olid, Juan de Eſcalante, Franciſco de Morla, Pedro de Alvarado, Franciſco de Salceda, Juan de Eſcobar, Gines de Nortes. Cortes himſelf commanded the Capitana, or Admiral. Franciſco de Orozeo, an officer formed in the wars of Italy, had the command of the artillery. The experienced Alaminos acted as chief pilot.

NOTE LXXIII. p. 183.

IN thoſe different conflicts, the Spaniards loſt only two men, but had a conſiderable number wounded. Though there be no occaſion for recourſe to any ſupernatural cauſe to account either for the greatneſs of their victories, or the ſmallneſs of their loſs; the Spaniſh hiſtorians fail not to aſcribe both to the patronage of St. Jago, the tutelar Saint of their country, who, as they relate, fought at the head of their countrymen, and by his proweſs gave a turn to the fate of the battle. Gomara

is

is the firſt who mentions this apparition of St. James. It is amuſing to obſerve the embarraſſment of B. Diaz de Caſtillo, occaſioned by the ſtruggle between his ſuperſtition and his veracity. The former diſpoſed him to believe this miracle, the latter reſtrained him from affirming it. "I acknowledge, ſays he, that all our exploits and victories are owing to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and that in this battle there was ſuch a number of Indians to every one of us, that if each had thrown a handful of earth they might have buried us, if by the great mercy of God we had not been protected. It may be that the perſon whom Gomara mentions as having appeared on a mottled grey horſe, was the glorious apoſtle Signor St. Jago or Signor St. Pedro; and that I, as being a ſinner, was not worthy to ſee him. This I know, that I ſaw Franciſco de Morla on ſuch a horſe, but as an unworthy tranſgreſſor, did not deſerve to ſee any of the holy apoſtles. It may have been the will of God, that it was ſo as Gomara relates, but until I read his Chronicle I never heard among any of the conquerors that ſuch a thing had happened." Cap. 34.

NOTE LXXIV. p. 188.

SEVERAL Spaniſh hiſtorians relate this occurrence in ſuch terms, as if they wiſhed it ſhould be believed, that the Indians loaded with the preſents, had carried them from the capital in the ſame ſhort ſpace of time that the couriers performed that journey. This is incredible, and Gomara mentions a circumſtance which ſhews, that nothing extraordinary happened on this occaſion. This rich preſent had been prepared for Grijalva, when he touched at the ſame place ſome months before, and was now ready to be delivered, as ſoon as Montezuma ſent ſent orders for that purpoſe. Gomara, Cron. c. xxvii. p. 28.

ACCORDING to B. Diaz del Caſtillo, the value of the ſilver plate repreſenting the moon, was alone above twenty thouſand peſos, about five thouſand pounds Sterling.

NOTE LXXV. p. 194.

THIS private traffic was directly contrary to the inſtructions of Velaſquez, who enjoined, that whatever was acquired by trade ſhould be thrown into the common ſtock. But it appears, that the ſoldiers had each a private aſſortment of toys, and other goods proper for the Indian trade, and Cortes gained their favour by encouraging this under-hand barter. B. Diaz, c. 41.

NOTE LXXVI. p. 204.

GOMARA has publiſhed a catalogue of the various articles of which this preſent conſiſted. Cron. c. 49. P. Martyr ab Angleria, who ſaw them after they were brought to Spain, and who ſeems to have examined them with great attention, gives a deſcription of each, which is curious, as it conveys ſome idea of the progreſs which the Mexicans had made in ſeveral arts of elegance. De inſulis nuper inventis liber, p. 354, &c.

NOTE LXXVII. p. 211.

THERE is no circumſtance in the hiſtory of the conqueſt of America, which is more queſtionable than the account of the numerous armies brought into the field againſt the Spaniards. As the war with the Tlaſcalans, though of ſhort duration, was one of the moſt conſiderable which they waged in America, the account given of their forces merits ſome attention. The only authentic information

information concerning this is derived from three authors. Cortes, in his ſecond diſpatch to the emperor, dated at Segura de la Frontera, October 30, 1520, thus eſtimates the number of their troops in the firſt battle 6000; in the ſecond battle 100,000; in the third battle 150,000. Relat. ap. Ramuſ. iii. 228. Bernal Diaz del Caſtillo, who was an eye-witneſs, and engaged in all the actions of this war, thus reckons their numbers; in the firſt battle 3000, p. 43; in the ſecond battle 6000, ibid. in the third battle 50,000, p. 45. Gomara, who was Cortes's chaplain after his return to Spain, and publiſhed his *Cronica* in 1552, follows the computation of Cortes, except in the ſecond battle, where he reckons the Tlaſcalans at 80,000, p. 49. It was manifeſtly the intereſt of Cortes to magnify his own dangers and exploits. For it was only by the merit of extraordinary ſervices, that he could hope to atone for his irregular conduct, in aſſuming an independent command. Bern. Diaz, though abundantly diſpoſed to place his own proweſs, and that of his fellow-conquerors in the moſt advantageous point of light, had not the ſame temptation to exaggerate; and, it is probable, that his account of the numbers approaches nearer to the truth. The aſſembling of an army of 150,000 men requires many previous arrangements, and ſuch proviſion for their ſubſiſtence as ſeems to be beyond the foreſight of Americans. The degree of cultivation in Tlaſcala does not ſeem to have been ſo great, as to have furniſhed ſuch a vaſt army with proviſions. Though this province was ſo much better cultivated than other regions of New Spain, that it was called the *country of bread*; yet the Spaniards in their march ſuffered ſuch want, that they were obliged to ſubſiſt upon *Tunas*, a ſpecies of fruit which grows wild in the fields. Herrera, Dec. ii. lib. vi. c. 5. p. 182.

NOTE

NOTE LXXVIII. p. 214.

THESE unhappy victims are ſaid to be perſons of diſtinction. It ſeems improbable that ſo great a number as fifty ſhould be employed as ſpies. So many priſoners had been taken and diſmiſſed, and the Tlaſcalans had ſent ſo many meſſages to the Spaniſh quarters, that there appears to be no reaſon for hazarding the lives of ſo many conſiderable people, in order to procure information about the poſition and ſtate of their camp. The barbarous manner in which Cortes treated a people unacquainted with the laws of war eſtabliſhed among poliſhed nations, appears ſo ſhocking to the later Spaniſh writers, that they diminiſh the number of thoſe whom he puniſhed ſo cruelly. Herrera ſays, that he cut off the hands of ſeven, and the thumbs of ſome more. Dec. ii. lib. ii. c. 8. De Solis relates, that the hands of fourteen or fifteen were cut off, and the thumbs of all the reſt. Lib. ii. c. 20. But Cortes himſelf, Relat. p. 228, b. and after him Gomara, c. 48, affirm, that the hands of all the fifty were cut off.

NOTE LXXIX. p. 216.

THE horſes were objects of the greateſt aſtoniſhment to all the people of New Spain. At firſt they imagined the horſe and his rider, like the Centaurs of the ancients, to be ſome monſtrous animal of a terrible form; and ſuppoſing, that their food was the ſame as that of men, brought fleſh and bread to nouriſh them. Even after they diſcovered their miſtake, they believed the horſes devoured men in battle, and when they neighed, thought that they were demanding their prey. It was not the intereſt of the Spaniards to undeceive them. Herrera, Dec. ii. lib. vi. c. 11.

NOTE

NOTE LXXX. p. 221.

ACCORDING to Bart. de las Caſas, there was no reaſon for this maſſacre, and it was an act of wanton cruelty, perpetrated merely to ſtrike terror into the people of New Spain. Relac. de la Deſtruyc. p. 17, &c. But the zeal of Las Caſas often leads him to exaggerate. In oppoſition to him Bern. Diaz, c. 83, aſſerts, that the firſt miſſionaries ſent into New Spain by the emperor, made a judicial inquiry into this tranſaction; and having examined the prieſts and elders of Cholula, found that there was a real conſpiracy to cut off the Spaniards, and that the account given by Cortes was exactly true. As it was the object of Cortes at that time, and manifeſtly his intereſt, to gain the good-will of Montezuma, it is improbable, that he would have taken a ſtep which tended ſo viſibly to alienate him from the Spaniards, if he had not believed it to be neceſſary for his own preſervation. At the ſame time, the Spaniards who ſerved in America had ſuch contempt for the natives, and thought them ſo little entitled to the common rights of men, that Cortes might hold the Cholulans as guilty upon ſlight and imperfect evidence. The ſeverity of the puniſhment was certainly exceſſive and atrocious.

NOTE LXXXI. p. 222.

THIS deſcription is taken almoſt literally from Bernal Diaz del Caſtillo, who was ſo unacquainted with the art of compoſition, as to be incapable of embelliſhing his narrative. He relates in a ſimple and rude ſtyle what paſſed in his own mind, and that of his fellow-ſoldiers on that occaſion; "and let it not be thought ſtrange, ſays he, that I ſhould write in this manner of what then happened, for it ought to be conſidered, that it is one thing to relate, another to have beheld things that were never before ſeen, or heard, or ſpoken of before among men." Cap. 86. p. 64. b.

NOTE

NOTE LXXXII. p. 233.

B. Diaz del Caſtillo gives us ſome idea of the fatigue and hardſhips they underwent in performing this, and other parts of duty. During the nine months, that they remained in Mexico, every man without any diſtinction between officers and ſoldiers, ſlept on his arms, in his quilted jacket and gorget. They lay on mats, or ſtraw ſpread on the floor, and each was obliged to hold himſelf as alert as if he had been on guard. "This, adds he, became ſo habitual to me, that even now in my advanced age, I always ſleep in my cloaths, and never in any bed. When I viſit my *Encômienda*, I reckon it ſuitable to my rank, to have a bed carried along with my other baggage, but I never go into it; but, according to cuſtom, I lie in my cloaths, and walk frequently during the night into the open air, to view the ſtars as I was wont when in ſervice." Cap. 108.

NOTE LXXXIII. p. 235.

CORTES himſelf, in his ſecond diſpatch to the emperor, does not explain the motives which induced him either to condemn Qualpopoca to the flames, or to put Montezuma in irons. Ramuſ. iii. 236. B. Diaz is ſilent with reſpect to his reaſons for the former; and the only cauſe he aſſigns for the latter was, that he might meet with no interruption in executing the ſentence pronounced againſt Qualpopoca, c. xcv. p. 75. But as Montezuma was his priſoner, and abſolutely in his power, the inſult offered to that monarch could have no effect but to irritate him unneceſſarily. Gomara ſuppoſes, that Cortes had no other object than to occupy Montezuma with his own diſtreſs and ſufferings, that he might give leſs attention to what befel Qualpopoca. Cron. c. 89. Herrera adopts the ſame opinion. Dec. ii. lib. viii. c. 9. But it ſeems an odd expedient, in order to make a perſon bear one injury,

injury, to load him with another that is greater. De Solis imagines, that Cortes had nothing elſe in view than to intimidate Montezuma, ſo that he might make no attempt to reſcue the victims from their fate; but the ſpirit of that monarch was ſo ſubmiſſive, and he had ſo tamely given up the priſoners to the diſpoſal of Cortes, that he had little to dread from him. If the explanation which I have attempted to give of Cortes's proceedings on this occaſion be not admitted, it appears to me, that they muſt be reckoned among the wanton and barbarous acts of oppreſſion which occur too often in the hiſtory of the conqueſt of America.

NOTE LXXXIV. p. 239.

DE Solis aſſerts, lib. iv. c. 3. that the propoſition of doing homage to the King of Spain, came from Montezuma himſelf, and was made in order to induce the Spaniards to depart out of his dominions. He deſcribes his conduct on this occaſion, as if it had been founded upon a ſcheme of profound policy, and executed with ſuch refined addreſs, as to deceive Cortes himſelf. But there is no hint or circumſtance in the contemporary hiſtorians, Cortes, Diaz, or Gomara, to juſtify this theory. Montezuma, on other occaſions, diſcovered no ſuch extent of art and abilities. The anguiſh which he felt in performing this humbling ceremony is natural, if we ſuppoſe it to have been involuntary. But, according to the theory of De Solis, it would have been prepoſterous and inconſiſtent with his own deſign of deceiving the Spaniards.

NOTE LXXXV. p. 241.

IN ſeveral of the provinces, the Spaniards, with all their induſtry and influence, could collect no gold. In others, they procured only a few trinkets of ſmall value. Montezuma aſſured Cortes, that the preſent which he offered

offered to the King of Caſtile, after doing homage, conſiſted of all the treaſure amaſſed by his father; and told him, that he had already diſtributed the reſt of his gold and jewels among the Spaniards. B. Diaz, c. 104. Gomara relates, that all the ſilver collected amounted to 500 Marks. Cron. c. 93. This agrees with the account given by Cortes, that the royal fifth of ſilver was 100 marks. Relat. 239. B. So that the Sum total of ſilver was only 4000 ounces, at the rate of eight ounces a mark, which demonſtrates the proportion of ſilver to gold to have been exceedingly ſmall.

NOTE LXXXVI. p. 242.

DE Solis, lib. iv. c. 1. calls in queſtion the truth of this tranſaction, from no better reaſon than that it was inconſiſtent with that prudence which diſtinguiſhes the character of Cortes. But he ought to have recollected the impetuoſity of his zeal at Tlaſcala, which was no leſs imprudent. He aſſerts, that the evidence for it reſts upon the teſtimony of B. Diaz del Caſtillo, of Gomara, and of Herrera. They all concur indeed, in mentioning this inconſiderate ſtep which Cortes took, and they had good reaſon to do ſo, for Cortes himſelf relates this exploit in his ſecond diſpatch to the Emperor, and ſeems to glory in it. Cort. Relat. Ramuſ. iii. 140. D. This is one inſtance among many, of De Solis's having conſulted with little attention the letters of Cortes to Charles V. from which the moſt authentic information with reſpect to his operations muſt be derived.

NOTE LXXXVII. p. 246.

HERRERA and De Solis ſuppoſe, that Velaſquez was encouraged to equip this armament againſt Cortes, by the accounts which he received from Spain concerning the reception of the agents ſent by the colony of Vera Cruz,

Cruz, and the warmth with which Fonſeca biſhop of Burgos had eſpouſed his intereſt, and condemned the proceedings of Cortes. Herrera, dec. ii. lib. ix. c. 18. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 5. But the chronological order of events refutes this ſuppoſition. Portocarrero and Montejo ſailed from Vera Cruz, July 26, 1519. Herrera, dec. ii. lib. v. c. 4. They landed at St. Lucar in October, according to Herrera, ibid. But P. Martyr, who attended the court at that time, and communicated every occurrence of moment to his correſpondents day by day, mentions the arrival of theſe agents, for the firſt time in December, and ſpeaks of it as a recent event. Epiſt. 650. All the hiſtorians agree, that the agents of Cortes had their firſt audience of the emperor at Tordeſillas, when he went to that town to viſit his mother in his way to St. Jago de Compoſtella. Herrera, dec. ii. lib. v. c. 4. De Solis, lib. iv. c. 5. But the emperor ſet out from Valladolid for Tordeſillas, on the 11th of March 1520; and P. Martyr mentions his having ſeen at that time the preſents made to Charles, Epiſt. 665. The armament under Narvaez ſailed from Cuba in April 1520. It is manifeſt then, that Velaſquez could not receive any account of what paſſed in this interview at Tordeſillas, previous to his hoſtile preparations againſt Cortes. His real motives ſeem to be thoſe which I have mentioned. The patent appointing him *Adelantado* of New Spain, with ſuch extenſive powers, bears date November 13, 1519. Herrera, dec. ii. lib. iii. c. 11. He might receive it about the beginning of January. Gomara takes notice, that as ſoon as this patent was delivered to him, he began to equip a fleet and levy forces. Cron. c. 96.

NOTE LXXXVIII. p. 248.

DE Solis contends, that as Narvaez had no interpreters, he could hold no intercourſe with the people of the provinces, nor converſe with them in any way but by ſigns, and that it was equally impoſſible for him to carry on

on any communication with Montezuma. Lib. iv. c. 7. But it is upon the authority of Cortes himſelf that I relate all the particulars of Narvaez's correſpondence, both with Montezuma and with his ſubjects in the maritime provinces. Relat. Ramuſ. iii. 244, A. C. Cortes affirms, that there was a mode of intercourſe between Narvaez and the Mexicans, but does not explain how it was carried on. Bernal Diaz ſupplies this defect, and informs us, that the three deſerters who joined Narvaez acted as interpreters, having acquired a competent knowledge of the language, c. 110. With his uſual minuteneſs he mentions their names and characters, and relates, in chapter 122, how they were puniſhed for their perfidy. The Spaniards had now reſided above a year among the Mexicans; and it is not ſurpriſing, that ſeveral among them ſhould have made ſome proficiency in ſpeaking their language. This ſeems to have been the caſe. Herrera, dec. ii. lib. x. c. 1. Both B. Diaz, who was preſent, and Herrera, the moſt accurate and beſt informed of all the Spaniſh writers, agree with Cortes in his account of the ſecret correſpondence carried on with Montezuma. Dec. ii. lib. ix. c. 18, 19. De Solis ſeems to conſider it as a diſcredit to Cortes, his hero, that Montezuma ſhould have been ready to engage in a correſpondence with Narvaez. He ſuppoſes that monarch to have contracted ſuch a wonderful affection for the Spaniards, that he was not ſolicitous to be delivered from them. After the indignity with which he had been treated, ſuch an affection is incredible; and even De Solis is obliged to acknowledge, that it muſt be looked upon as one of the miracles which God wrought to facilitate the conqueſt, lib. iv. c. 7. The truth is, Montezuma, however much overawed by his dread of the Spaniards, was extremely impatient to recover his liberty.

NOTE LXXXIX. p. 261.

THESE words I have borrowed from the anonymous Account of the European ſettlements in America, publiſhed by Dodſley, in two volumes, 8vo. a work of ſo

ſo much merit, that I ſhould think there is hardly any writer in the age who ought to be aſhamed of acknowledging himſelf to be the author of it.

NOTE XC. p. 267.

THE contemporary hiſtorians differ conſiderably with reſpect to the loſs of the Spaniards on this occaſion. Cortes, in his ſecond diſpatch to the emperor, makes the number only 150. Relat. ap. Ramuſ. iii. p. 249, A. But it was manifeſtly his intereſt, at that juncture, to conceal from the court of Spain the full extent of the loſs which he had ſuſtained. De Solis, always ſtudious to diminiſh every misfortune that befel his countrymen, rates their loſs at about two hundred men. Lib. iv. c. 19. B. Diaz affirms, that they loſt 870 men, and that only 440 eſcaped from Mexico, c. 128, p. 108. b. Palafox, biſhop of Los Angeles, who ſeems to have inquired into the early tranſactions of his countrymen in New Spain, with great attention, confirms the account of B. Diaz with reſpect to the extent of their loſs. Virtudes del Indio, p. 22. Gomara ſtates their loſs at 450 men. Cron. c. 109. Some months afterwards, when Cortes had received ſeveral reinforcements, he muſtered his troops, and found them to be only 590. Relat. ap. Ramuſ. iii. p. 255, E. Now, as Narvaez brought 880 men into New Spain, and about 400 of Cortes's ſoldiers were then alive, it is evident, that his loſs in the retreat from Mexico muſt have been much more conſiderable than what he mentions. B. Diaz, ſolicitous to magnify the dangers and ſufferings to which he and his fellow-conquerors were expoſed, may have exaggerated their loſs; but, in my opinion, it cannot well be eſtimated at leſs than 600 men.

NOTE

NOTE XCI. p. 285.

SOME remains of this great work are ſtill viſible, and the ſpot where the brigantines were built and launched, is ſtill pointed out to ſtrangers. Torquemada viewed them. Monarq. Indiana, vol. i. p. 531.

NOTE XCII. p. 292.

THE ſtation of Alvarado on the cauſeway of Tacuba was the neareſt to the city. Cortes obſerves, that there they could diſtinctly obſerve what paſſed when their countrymen were ſacrificed. Relat. ap. Ramuſ. iii. p. 273. E. B. Diaz who belonged to Alvarado's diviſion, relates what he beheld with his own eyes. C. 152. p. 148, b. 149, a. Like a man whoſe courage was ſo clear as to be above ſuſpicion, he deſcribes with his uſual ſimplicity the impreſſion which this ſpectacle made upon him. "Before, ſays he, I ſaw the breaſts of my companions opened, their hearts yet fluttering, offered to an accurſed idol, and their fleſh devoured by their exulting enemies; I was accuſtomed to enter a battle not only without fear, but with high ſpirit. But from that time I never advanced to fight the Mexicans without a ſecret horror and anxiety, my heart trembled at the thoughts of the death which I had ſeen them ſuffer." He takes care to add, that as ſoon as the combat began this terror went off; and, indeed, his adventurous bravery on every occaſion is full evidence of this. B. Diaz, c. 156. p. 157, a.

NOTE

NOTE XCIII. p. 297.

ONE circumſtance in this ſiege merits particular notice. The account which the Spaniſh writers give of the numerous armies employed in the attack or defence of Mexico, ſeems to be incredible. According to Cortes himſelf, he had at one time 150,000 auxiliary Indians in his ſervice. Relat. Ramuſ. iii. 275, E. Gomara aſſerts, that they were above 200,000. Cron. c. 136. Herrera, an author of higher authority, ſays, they were about 200,000. Dec. iii. lib. i. c. 19. None of the contemporary writers aſcertain explicitly the number of perſons in Mexico during the ſiege. But Cortes on ſeveral occaſions mentions the number of Mexicans who were ſlain, or who periſhed for want of food; and, if we may rely on thoſe circumſtances, it is probable, that above two hundred thouſand muſt have been ſhut up in the town. But the quantity of proviſions neceſſary for the ſubſiſtence of ſuch vaſt multitudes aſſembled in one place during three months is ſo great, and it requires ſo much foreſight and arrangement to collect them, ſo as to be certain of a regular ſupply, that one can hardly believe that this could be accompliſhed in a country where agriculture was ſo imperfect as in the Mexican empire, where there were no tame animals, and by a people naturally ſo improvident, and ſo incapable of executing a complicated plan as the moſt improved Americans. The Spaniards, with all their care and attention, fared very poorly, and were often reduced to extreme diſtreſs from want of proviſions. B. Diaz, p. 142. Cortes Relat. 271, D. Cortes on one occaſion mentions ſlightly the ſubſiſtence of his army; and after acknowledging, that they were often in great want, adds, that they received ſupplies from the people of the country, of fiſh, and of ſome fruit, which he calls the cherries of the country, Ibid. B. Diaz ſays, that they had cakes of maize, and ceraſas de la tierra; and when the ſeaſon of theſe was over, another fruit, which he calls *Tunas*; but their moſt comfortable

fortable ſubſiſtence was a root which the Indians uſe as food, to which he gives the name of *Quilites*, p. 142. The Indian auxiliaries had one means of ſubſiſtence more than the Spaniards. They fed upon the bodies of the Mexians whom they killed in battle. Cort. Relat. 176, C. B. Diaz confirms his relation, and adds, that when the Indians returned from Mexico to their own country, they carried with them large quantities of the fleſh of the Mexicans ſalted or dried, as a moſt acceptable preſent to their friends, that they might have the pleaſure of feeding on the bodies of their enemies in their feſtivals. p. 157. De Solis, who ſeems to conſider it as an imputation of diſcredit to his countrymen, that they ſhould act in concert with auxiliaries who fed upon human fleſh, is ſolicitous to prove, that they endeavoured to prevent their aſſociates from eating the bodies of the Mexicans, lib. v. c. 24. But he has no authority for this from the original hiſtorians. Neither Cortes himſelf, nor B. Diaz, ſeem to have had any ſuch ſcruple; and, on many occaſions, mention the Indian repaſts, which were become familiar to them, without any mark of abhorrence. Even with this additional ſtock of food for the Indians, it was hardly poſſible to procure ſubſiſtence for armies amounting to ſuch numbers as we find in the Spaniſh writers. Perhaps, the beſt ſolution of the difficulty is, to adopt the opinion of B. Diaz del Caſtillo, the moſt artleſs of all the *Hiſtoriadores primitivos*. "When Gomara, ſays he, on ſome occaſions relates, that there were ſo many thouſand Indians our auxiliaries, and on others, that there were ſo many thouſand houſes in this or that town, no regard is to be paid to his enumeration, as he has no authority for it, the numbers not being in reality the fifth of what he relates. If we add together the different numbers which he mentions, that country would contain more millions than there are in Caſtile." C. 129. But though ſome conſiderable deduction ſhould certainly be made from the Spaniſh accounts of the Mexican forces; they muſt have been very numerous, for nothing but an immenſe ſuperiority in number, could have enabled them to withſtand a body of nine hundred Spaniards, commanded by a general of ſuch abilities as Cortes.

NOTE

NOTE XCIV. p. 310.

IN relating the oppreſſive and cruel proceedings of the conquerors of New Spain, I have not followed B. de las Caſas as my guide. His account of them, Relat. de la Deſtruyc. p. 18, &c. is manifeſtly exaggerated. It is from the teſtimony of Cortes himſelf and Gomara, who wrote under his eye, that I have taken my account of the puniſhment of the Panucans, and they relate it without any diſapprobation. B. Diaz, contrary to his uſual cuſtom, mentions it only in general terms, c. 162. Herrera, ſolicitous to extenuate this barbarous action of his countrymen, though he mentions 60 caziques, and 400 men of note, as being condemned to the flames, aſſerts, that thirty only were burnt, and the reſt pardoned. Dec. iii. lib. v. c. 7. But this is contrary to the teſtimony of the original hiſtorians, particularly of Gomara, whom it appears he had conſulted, as he adopts ſeveral of his expreſſions in this paſſage. The puniſhment of Guatimozin is related by the moſt authentic of the Spaniſh writers. Torquemada has extracted from a hiſtory of Tezeuco, compoſed in the Mexican tongue, an account of this tranſaction, more favourable to Guatimozin than that of the Spaniſh authors. Mon. Indiana, i. 575. According to that account, Cortes had ſcarcely a ſhadow of evidence to juſtify ſuch a wanton act of cruelty. B. Diaz affirms, that Guatimozin and his fellow-ſufferers aſſerted their innocence with their laſt breath, and that many of the Spaniſh ſoldiers condemned this action of Cortes as equally unneceſſary and unjuſt, p. 200, b, 201, a.

NOTE XCV. p. 312.

THE motive for undertaking this expedition was, to puniſh Chriſtoval de Olid, one of his officers who had revolted againſt him, and aimed at eſtabliſhing an independent juriſdiction. Cortes regarded this inſurrection as of ſuch dangerous example, and dreaded ſo much the abilities and popularity of its author, that in perſon he led the body of troops deſtined to ſuppreſs it. He marched, according to Gomara, three thouſand miles, through a country abounding with thick foreſts, rugged mountains, deep rivers, thinly inhabited, and cultivated only in a few places. What he ſuffered from famine, from the hoſtility of the natives, from the climate, and from hardſhips of every ſpecies, has nothing in hiſtory parallel to it, but what occurs in the adventures of the other diſcoverers and conquerors of the New World. Cortes was employed in this dreadful ſervice above two years, and though it was not diſtinguiſhed by any ſplendid event, he exhibited, during the courſe of it, greater perſonal courage, more fortitude of mind, more perſeverance and patience, than in any other period or ſcene in his life. Herrera, dec. iii. lib. vi. vii. viii. ix. Gomara Cron. c. 163—177. B. Diaz, 174—190.

NOTE XCVI. p. 314.

ACCORDING to Herrera, the treaſure which Cortes brought with him, conſiſted of fifteen hundred marks of wrought plate, two hundred thouſand peſos of fine gold, and ten thouſand of inferior ſtandard, many rich jewels, one in particular worth forty thouſand peſos, and ſeveral trinkets and ornaments of value. Dec. iv. lib. iii. c. 8. lib. iv. c. 1. He afterwards engaged to give a portion with his daughter of a hundred thouſand peſos. Gomara Cron. c. 237. The fortune

fortune which he left his ſons was very conſiderable. But as we have before related, the ſum divided among the conquerors on the firſt reduction of Mexico was very ſmall. There appears then to be ſome reaſon for ſuſpecting that the accuſations of Cortes's enemies were not altogether deſtitute of foundation. They charged him with having unjuſtly applied to his own uſe a diſproportionate ſhare of the Mexican ſpoils; with having concealed the royal treaſures of Montezuma and Guatimozin; with defrauding the king of his fifth, and robbing his followers of what was due to them. Herrera, dec. iii. lib. viii. c. 15. dec. iv. lib. iii. c. 8. Some of the conquerors themſelves entertained ſuſpicions of the ſame kind. B. Diaz. c. 157.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.